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THE
Theology of Faith.

BY

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INTRODUCTION.

In presenting the Catholic view of faith in the following pages the author is conscious of the difficulties which must attend an exposition of the subject in any form other than Scholastic. At the risk, however, of certain defects which must appear in a treatise of this kind if traditional methods are not strictly adhered to, the writer has thought it well to present Catholic teaching on the fundamental question of faith in a way which is, perhaps, best suited to the tastes of most readers. The author, therefore, hopes that non-Catholics, as well as Catholics, may read this treatise with profit, and feels that if scientific form would turn away ordinary readers from its perusal he is justified in not adopting it.

The subject of faith, although one of absorbing interest at all times, has, perhaps, in recent years, given rise to more discussion than at any time in history. Differences of opinion in connexion with it at the present time turn not so much upon the truths of faith—upon what men are bound to believe and what they are to reject—as upon the nature of faith itself. The great Encyclical of our Holy Father the Pope on the errors of Modernism brings this fact prominently

before us. Yet these errors could not have arisen if men had not previously rejected certain fundamental and supernatural truths, and amongst them the authority of the Catholic Church.

If the elements which go to make up Divine faith are overlooked by the persons who discuss this question or write upon it, errors most fatal and disastrous are certain to appear, and those errors will, in many cases, be so far-reaching in their effects as ultimately to lead to the complete overthrow of all revealed religion. We have, therefore, devoted the opening chapter of the treatise to an explanation of the virtue of faith, its supernatural character, and its influence on the faculty in which it inheres. We have tried to explain how it is acquired, and the various ways in which it may be lost, and also suggested to the reader some of the differences which exist between it and the moral virtues. In referring to the nature and causes of faith we are reminded that the Vatican Council (Cap. 3, *De Fide*) teaches that faith is a supernatural virtue by which, under the inspiration and help of God's grace, we believe that those things which were revealed by Him are true, not because their intrinsic truth is perceived by the natural light of reason, but on account of the authority of God who reveals them and who can neither deceive nor be deceived; that to secure a reasonable assent to faith God has willed that the external arguments for revelation should

be joined to the internal assistance of the Holy Spirit; and that those external arguments are, in the first place, miracles and prophecy which, since they go to demonstrate God's omnipotence and infinite knowledge, are unquestionable signs of Divine revelation and are also suited to the intellectual capacities of all.

In trying to explain the nature of faith we have treated of it in its relation to the human faculties, and especially in its relation to the reason and will (cc. ii. and iii.). God does not ask us to accept faith blindly. On the contrary He wishes us to make use of our reason, as a preliminary to faith. The Apostles appealed to the reason of the unbelieving multitudes, and St. Paul often did so with great effect; yet, in alluding to his share in the work, the Apostle thus wrote: "I have planted, Apollo watered, but God gave the increase" (1 Cor. iii. 6). God alone can give men faith, although, by appealing to the reasonableness of Christian faith, the preacher tries to remove the difficulties and prejudices against its acceptance. Hence the necessity of having the reason and will well ordered as a preparation for faith.

The acceptance of the truths of faith depends on the will, and so a chapter is devoted to the relation which exists between faith and the will. Not only is the will operative in the acts which precede the acceptance of faith; it is also necessary in the very act of faith itself. The

truths of revelation are obscure, and hence they cannot, of themselves, command the assent of the intellect, if the will is not operative in moving it to the assent. But the will also acts in a very special way on faith through the virtue of charity. From charity faith receives its vitality, and by its means acts meritorious of eternal life are elicited. The relation which exists between the will and faith, under this aspect, is very important and should not be overlooked; for as in the act of faith itself the will helps to lift the mind to God the First Truth, so, through charity, it moves the believer towards his last end.

A special chapter is devoted to faith and the religious sense (c. iv.). Without Divine revelation and the guidance of the Church the religious sense in man's fallen state is certain to become perverted. Yet modern free theological speculation ignores, or refuses to take due cognizance of, this possibility; and, resting on the belief that a blind religious feeling must be always orthodox, even in the most wicked, and amongst races the most degraded and outcast, modern theological speculators are ready to concede that all religions are true, that the only difference between them is one of degree, and that this difference is proportionate to the growth or development of the religious sense.

The perfection of religion does not, according to this view, depend on revealed truth,

but on evolution, or upon the vital growth of the religious sense itself; and in order to establish the infallible character of the latter the authors of this theory trace its development to the immediate influence of God working internally in man. They admit that there may be, and are, limitations to its growth, but these are traceable to extrinsic circumstances and environment. In fact, religion originates with the manifestation of God within the religious sense, or with Divine immanence; and since God is true it follows that all religious manifestations are true. They may be more or less perfect, according to the perfections or imperfections of the subject from which they come, but they are all true, since they are all vital. Every act of religion points to the inner religious life of man, and is its true expression, just as a vital animal operation, even when weak, truly represents life, and is an index of that union between soul and body by which they form together a single principle of vital action.

But there is such a thing as a perverted religious sense. History and our own personal experience both go to show that without Divine revelation, in the orthodox sense, and the guidance of the Church, men's religious feelings can, and do, lead to all sorts of abuses. Moreover, if God is immanent in man, in this heterodox sense, it is strange that men become idolators; and if the voice of the religious sense is always

God's voice, God must often contradict Himself, and even fanaticism in its wildest ebullitions becomes praiseworthy.

The formal object of faith, or the authority of God, which comes to us, not from within ourselves, but from without, must be our guide in this matter, as must also be the material object of faith or the truths which God has revealed, and of which the Church is the living witness. These truths were given to us by God Himself, and although they do not come to us immediately from Him, yet He asks us to trust those to whom He gave the requisite credentials. Catholics claim, therefore, that there cannot be any deception in this matter, for their beliefs do not rest on subjective, but on objective and infallible criteria; and even though the Mysteries of Faith are not objectively evident to us, yet we accept them on the application of a rule which is objective in its certainty.

The latter portion of the treatise deals with the formal object of faith (c. v.), with its material object (c. vi.), the stability and development of the latter (cc. vii. and viii.), and also with the Church as a Rule of Faith (c. ix.). True development or growth in religion or in religious truth must be understood in an orthodox sense, within its proper environment, and therefore within the limits of the Visible Church. Growth is impossible without stability in the substance of faith, since permanency is a condition of all growth. A

feeling or passing phenomenon is incapable of growth, and development, in order to be orthodox, must always remain within the scope of revealed truth and be directed by the teaching of the Church. If anything appear as a development of doctrine without the sanction of the Church its value is only conditional. When the Church speaks, it may be to condemn it as a false growth, or as an accretion to doctrinal teaching.

The Teaching Church, then, must ever lead. But if God were immanent in man as a source of revelation the Teaching Church should follow rather than lead, since God Himself would then become the immediate guide to the individual or body of individuals. The authority of God is greater than the authority of the Church. Indeed the New Theologians are logical on this point. If their premises are true they rightly make the Church Teaching subservient to those whom it is supposed to teach ; although, on such a supposition, the retention of any authority on the part of the Teaching Church seems in itself sufficiently paradoxical.

The supreme criterion of truth is objective evidence. Traditionalists and Fideists both failed to recognize this fact. They tried to elevate authority at the expense of reason. Their errors, however, affected rather the *preambula* of faith and the grounds of our certainty in accepting them than the truths of faith themselves. But Modernism and Rationalism touch each a

remote extreme. Modernism practically rejects reason for the sake of the religious sense; while Philosophic Rationalism rejects religion for the sake of reason. Protestantism, as a mean between these two extremes, does not exclude either. It ever tends to one or other; and from the beginning many of its prominent leaders have, at one time or other, championed extreme Pietism or Rationalism.

The existence of an infallible teaching authority can alone preserve the individual from error in faith and religion. Wherever a strong and orthodox religious sentiment is found it manifests itself, not at the expense of supernatural truth, but as a resultant of true belief and of a faith which embraces all objectively-revealed truth. The Church, as the living representative of Christ on earth, not only safeguards for us the full Deposit of Faith; she also teaches us that an act of faith is not identical with any religious feeling or emotion; that it is not an act of mere reason or will, or an act of any mere natural faculty; that if it is an act of the intellect it is such in as far as that faculty is elevated, strengthened, and perfected by a supernatural and Divine light from God; and, that unless this light is infused, it is impossible to elicit an act of faith. Yet while God is thus the author of faith, man can, if he trusts to himself alone, to his instincts and sentiments, become the author of his own spiritual downfall and eternal ruin.

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CHAPTER I.

The Light of Faith.

I.

With the inspired writers, as well as with Christian apologists, the term *faith* has various significations. It is sometimes used in reference to a habit or act of the intellect, sometimes to an act or habit of the will. Etymologically it is derived from the Latin *fido*, and so *fides*, like the Greek πίστις, originally signified intellectual conviction. With the sacred and inspired authors, when used in reference to the will, it sometimes means fidelity to one's promises. In this sense St. Paul uses the word in his Epistle to the Romans, when he writes: "Shall their unbelief make the faith of God without effect?"[1] At other times the word is used to signify the promise made by the faithful to God. Writing to Timothy, the same Apostle says: "They have made void their first faith."[2] Again, in the sacred writings it signifies confidence in the fidelity of another to keep his promise. In this sense Our Lord used the term when He said to the Apostle Peter: "O thou of little faith, why didst thou doubt?"[3] As expressing a quality of the mind, sacred

[1] Rom. iii. 3. [2] 1 Tim. v. 12. [3] Matt. xiv. 31.

authors use it to denote the veracity or truthfulness of the speaker. The prophet Jeremias uses the word in this sense, when he writes: "Faith is lost and is taken away out of their mouths." [1] The word is also used in the sense of conscience. In his Epistle to the Romans, St. Paul writes: "All that is not of faith is sin." [2] The term is likewise used in reference to the object of supernatural faith. Thus in the Acts of the Apostles, we read: "A great multitude of the priests also obeyed the faith." [3]

In this chapter we treat of faith as a supernatural habit or act, in which sense frequent mention is made of it in Sacred Scripture. St. Paul refers to this habit in his First Epistle to the Corinthians, when he says: "And now there remain faith, hope and charity, these three." [4] He refers to the act of faith in his Epistle to the Hebrews, where he writes: "Without faith it is impossible to please God." [5] The Angelic Doctor, St. Thomas, writing of faith, says: "Sometimes that which is believed in is called faith, sometimes the act of faith itself, and sometimes the habit by which one believes." [6]

Protestant writers do not seem to be unanimous in their views on the virtue of faith. Some relegate it to the will; others to the intellect or reason, or, perhaps, in a confused way, to both

[1] Jerem. vii. 28. [2] Rom. xiv. 23. [3] Acts vi. 7.
[4] 1 Cor. xiii. 13. [5] Heb. xi. 6.
[6] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LV. art. 1 ad 1.

together. Luther made faith a function of the will. His conception of it is peculiar and imperfect, and implies a mere confidence or trust in the fidelity of God to keep His promises. Restricted in this way, the essential elements of supernatural faith disappear; for faith is essentially a virtue of the understanding. The Councils of the Church have always spoken of it as such and the definition of faith given by the Doctor of the Gentiles sufficiently indicates the same truth. St. Paul thus defines it: "*Faith is the substance of things to be hoped for, the evidence of things that appear not.*" [1] St. Thomas, commenting on this definition, says: "When faith is said to be *evidence* it is distinguished from opinion, suspicion and doubt, in which the adherence of the intellect to something is unstable; when it is said to be *of things that appear not,* faith is distinguished from knowledge and understanding by which a thing is apparent; when it is said to be the *substance of things to be hoped for,* it is distinguished from faith, as commonly understood, which is not directed to happiness or to the object of hope." [2]

Christian faith, though supernatural, yet, like every other gift bestowed on man by God, is in perfect harmony with man's nature. St. Thomas makes some beautiful reflections on the possibilities of human nature in its higher relationship

[1] Heb. xi. 1.
[2] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. IV. art. 1.

with God. If we consider man apart from the supernatural we find him possessed of intelligence and free-will, by which he is primarily made to the likeness of God. Knowledge and love are, consequently, predominant operations in human life. Love, which is the root and source of every affection in man, presupposes knowledge.[1] Knowledge is the cause of love.[2] The human mind intuitively assents to the truth of first principles, and then proceeds to the scientific conclusions deducible from them. But the acquisition of truth of any kind is impossible unless we start with an instinctive confidence in the inerrancy of our own faculties. This confidence is not indeed the criterion of intellectual truth as acquired by our reason or understanding. But the mind, without questioning, assents to certain truths; and if we are asked why this is so, the only answer is, that God has created the mind to respond to truth just as He has created the nerves to respond to certain nervous stimuli.

Again, we feel, we know, and in fact it is a matter of daily experience, that God has made man a creature of beliefs; and He has done nothing in vain. Belief and faith enter more into our daily lives than perhaps we are aware of. Every man must profess a creed, if not a supernatural and doctrinal one, at least a natural

[1] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LXII. art. 2 ad 3; St. Augustine, *De Civ. Dei*, lib. xiv. c. 9.

[2] Ibid. Ia. IIae. Q. XXVII. art. 2; Aristotle, *Ethic.* lib. ix. c. 5.

one, for belief belongs to man's higher and rational life.

To be willing to believe, then, in every department where belief is possible, is, provided the conditions for belief are verified, normal and rational. To be unwilling to believe where the conditions for belief are verified, or, from any reason whatever, to be unwilling to examine the motives or conditions for belief in any particular case is highly abnormal and unreasonable.

We must not, however, be expected to give an analysis of our beliefs beyond a reasonable appeal to authority and to the intrinsic worth of our own faculties. To ask for more would be as absurd as to ask why we have eyes and ears, free-will and intelligence. "Everybody has," writes Mr. Balfour, "and everybody is obliged to have, some convictions about the world in which he lives, convictions which in their narrow and particular form (as what I have before called beliefs of perception, memory and expectation) guide us all, children, savages and philosophers alike, in the ordinary conduct of day to day existence, which, when generalized and extended, supply us with some of the leading presuppositions on which the whole fabric of science appears logically to depend."[1]

Since man has been created capable of belief, and is in fact dependent on it as an indispensable asset in his rational and higher life, it is to be

[1] *Foundations of Belief*, p. 236.

expected that belief should play an important part in religion, especially when one remembers that man is essentially a religious being. "No religion yet," writes Cardinal Newman, "has been a religion of physics, or of philosophy. It has ever been synonymous with revelation. It never has been a deduction from what we know; it has ever been an assertion of what we are to believe. It has never lived in a conclusion; it has ever been a message, a history, or a vision. . . . There is no difference here between true religion and pretended." [1] "Faith or assurance," writes Mr. Balfour, ". . . seems to be a necessity in every great department of knowledge which touches on action. . . . Theologians are, for the most part, agreed that without it religion is but the ineffectual profession of a barren creed." [2]

It is not surprising, then, to find faith of some description enter into every religious system. Even superstition and magic, however debased and degraded they may be, are an index of man's natural tendencies to believe in a creed of some kind.[3] In certain forms of Buddhism Buddha is represented as Amida or infinite light, whose power is appropriated by faith. In Shintoism, where religion takes a different form, the idea of faith remains; and among those savage tribes whose faith in

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, p. 96.
[2] *Foundations of Belief*, pp. 240, 241.
[3] Cf. Schanz, *A Christian Apology*, English translation, vol. i. p. 69.

the existence of one supreme being seems lost, there is still a belief that brooks and trees are peopled by mysterious spirits.[1]

Notwithstanding the extravagant assertions of certain writers of the Darwinian school (such as Sir John Lubbock and Häckel) regarding the savages, we find even Professor Huxley admitting that all of them have some form of religion or belief. "There are savages," he writes, "without God in any proper sense of the word, but there are none without ghosts." [2] Faith, then, of some kind is bound up with religion, even with natural religion, or, in its corrupt forms, with the most senseless superstition.

Such beliefs are not, of course, identical with Christian faith, and we refer to them here for the purpose of showing that God, in calling man to the supernatural life of faith, far from ignoring his natural instincts or impeding the natural operations of his faculties, makes provision for them and looks to their perfection. The harmony which exists between the natural and supernatural must not be lost sight of, if we are to understand properly the economy of salvation. The gifts of the Holy Ghost bring the obediential powers of the soul into action. The virtue of faith would be impossible in a being not capable of belief, and whose perfection does not depend in some measure upon his beliefs. If Divine revelation

[1] Ibid. p. 67.
[2] *Lay Sermons and Addresses*, June, 1870, p. 179.

has entered the domain of human experience, it is intelligible on the supposition that it has been given in order to perfect man in his religious convictions. Since belief is possible only in a rational being, we can understand why St. Augustine, speaking of supernatural revelation, says: "We could not believe if we had not rational souls." [1] "Faith," Paschal remarks, "is the highest act of reason."

It seems difficult to understand how men who allow unlimited scope to their credulity in many departments of thought, can draw the line where there is question of the supernatural, or even of its possibilities. Such people seem not to know the value of a gift, or are too proud to take it even from God. "I have never seen the supernatural," said J. J. Rousseau, and yet we may presume that he believed in many things which he had never seen. Unreasonable scepticism does not commend itself to great minds. St. Thomas sets up the claim to a higher relationship with God by an appeal to reason itself. "There are two things," remarks the Angelic Doctor, "which contribute to the perfection of an inferior nature: one is in harmony with its own natural activity; the other is in harmony with the influence of a higher nature; as water by reason of its own motion moves towards the centre, yet by the influence of the moon and

[1] Ep. cxx. ad Consent. c. 3, Migne, *P. L.*, tom. xxxiii.

under the laws that govern the ebb and flow (of the tides) it moves around the centre. . . . The perfection, therefore, of a rational creature consists not merely in what suits it according to its own nature, but also in what is given to it from the participation of the Divine Goodness."[1]

If this supernatural influence is to be operative, theological or divine faith must get a leading place in human life and activity. The Angelic Doctor therefore adds : " The ultimate happiness of man consists in a participation of the supernatural vision of God. Man, however, cannot attain to this vision unless he is taught of God according to the teaching of St. John : " Every one that hath heard of the Father, and hath learned, cometh to Me." [2] It is necessary, then, that such a person believe, if he is to attain to perfect knowledge ; for, as the philosopher (Aristotle) remarks, ' it is incumbent on the person who is being taught, to believe.' " [3]

II.

We may define this higher kind of faith as *a supernatural and theological virtue which disposes the mind to assent freely, with certainty and on the authority of God, to all the truths revealed by Him.* From this definition it is clear,

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. II. art. 3.
[2] John vi. 45.
[3] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. II. art. 3.

that for an act of supernatural faith, not only must the person believing be taught either immediately or mediately by God, but he must also receive from Him a new faculty. God enlightens the mind of such a person interiorly by a new light, which is the gift of faith, and which elevates and perfects the mind, enabling it to elicit acts which are beyond the native powers of the soul. "Since man," writes St. Thomas Aquinas, "in assenting to those things which are of faith is elevated above his nature, it is necessary that this be from a supernatural principle which moves him interiorly, and which is God." [1] Again he writes: "The internal office of teaching is properly the work of God." [2] From this it is evident how pre-eminently this supernatural work belongs to God, a fact which is borne out by the words of Christ, when He says: "No man can come to Me unless the Father who hath sent Me draw him." [3]

The assent to faith is directed by the will under the influence of grace; and although the faculty which elicits the act is the intellect, yet it is the intellect supernaturalized by a new power or force. The act of faith is therefore supernatural, whether we consider its principle, which is the understanding strengthened by interior faith and moved by the will under grace, or its object,

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. VI. art. 1.
[2] *Contra Gentiles*, iv. 17.
[3] John vi. 44.

which is revealed truth, or its motive, which is the authority of God. The assent of the intellect under such conditions is always free from error. For this reason the Angelic Doctor says : " By the light of infused faith a person assents to the truths of faith, and not to those things which are contrary to faith." [1] Faith, which is a participation of the Divine light, guides the mind with unerring certainty to embrace supernatural truth, just as the intellect, by the natural light of reason, assents intuitively to the truth of first principles. Such certainty may appear puzzling, since the object of faith is of its nature obscure. This is so ; but the subjective light corresponds to the formal object of faith, or the infallible authority of Divine Truth Itself, which can neither deceive nor be deceived.

In reference to this certainty of Divine faith we may remark, in passing, that some writers, and amongst them Mr. Balfour, fail to see how faith, since it depends on so many possible contingencies which are far from being infallibly certain, is itself so infallible and convincing. Mr. Balfour thus writes : " Indeed, when we reflect upon the character of the religious books and of the religious organizations through which Christianity has been built up ; when we consider the variety in date, in occasion, in authorship, in context, in spiritual development, which mark

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. II. art. 3 ad 2.

the first; the stormy history and the inevitable division which mark the second; when we, further, reflect on the astonishing number of the problems, linguistic, critical, metaphysical, and historical, which must be settled, at least in some preliminary fashion, before either the books or the organizations can be supposed entitled by right of rational proof to the position of infallible guides, we can hardly suppose that we were intended to find in these the logical foundations of our system of religious beliefs, however important be the part (and it can be exaggerated) which they were destined to play in producing, fostering and directing it." [1]

We are doubtful whether Mr. Balfour, in the words quoted, makes provision for the difference in mental attitude between the Christian apologist or the religious inquirer and the believer. An act of faith is not as such the term of an evolutionary process, nor is it depending for its infallibility on any act or acts of the mind preceding it. In other words, though exegesis, hermeneutics, linguistic, metaphysical and historical criticism of the religious books may supply us with rational beliefs which serve as *præambula fidei*, these beliefs do not enter essentially into the act of faith. As motives of credibility they serve to give our faith a foundation in reason. They serve as preliminary conditions

[1] *Foundations of Belief*, p. 226.

for faith, and supply us with moral certainty concerning the facts of Sacred Scripture, with a certainty at least on a par with that of our beliefs in any other facts of history. But the certainty and infallibility of faith is of a different order; for it does not, as such, depend on natural knowledge, but on the infused light of faith, which is a participation of the Eternal Truth. If Mr. Balfour understands by "beliefs" Divine faith, or our acts of supernatural faith, he seems to overlook, or set aside, the value of this new and infused element; or he considers an act of faith to be something like the conclusion of a syllogism which depends on a previous number of mere natural truths, whereas "faith begins where reasoning ends," as Cardinal Manning puts it; or, in the words of Newman, "faith is a venture," although a safe one, like that of St. Peter when he walked on the waves of Genesareth. If Mr. Balfour, in the words quoted, intends to signify by "beliefs" mere natural or human beliefs, then he overrates the amount of infallibility or certitude which Christian apologists claim for them in connexion with historical religious facts. We are disposed to think that the term "beliefs" does not exactly bear this meaning in the text quoted; for if so, why choose the Sacred Scriptures in connexion with them rather than, say, the works of Herodotus or Cicero. In the works of these historians there are facts concerning which we have beliefs which

carry a certain degree of moral certitude. It must also be remembered that the objective element corresponding to the interior light of faith is the authority of God in revelation. Since He does not speak to us immediately, but has chosen an *organization* in which His truth is to be safeguarded and taught, we consider it unreasonable to ask us to accept supernatural truth, unless the authority which claims to represent Him is also infallible. In this way infallibility may be considered as a mere preliminary to faith. This, however, in no way excludes it from the Deposit of Revelation, of which it is a part, and where it is an object of faith and not merely of reason, and so occupies that department of truth of which faith gives us such infallible certainty. Infallibility both as a preliminary to faith and as an object of Divine faith must be understood before one can venture to give a decision on the subtle question of Papal Infallibility, of which Mr. Balfour gives an outline in his essay.[1]

III.

Aristotle defines a virtue as a habit which renders good both the possessor of the virtue and his work.[2] Needless to say, the definition of the Pagan philosopher applies only to an ac-

[1] *Foundations of Belief*, pp. 224, 225.
[2] *Ethic.* lib. ii. cap. 6.

quired habit or a moral virtue which is of its nature inferior to the theological virtue of faith, or even to any infused moral virtue which presupposes faith as its groundwork. The moral virtues, of which Aristotle writes, serve to give a direction, and a permanent direction, to the faculties of the soul, so that good acts are elicited by them with pleasure, ease and readiness; on this account the good acts are said to be virtuous acts.

The virtue of faith, in common with the other theological virtues, gives not merely a permanent tendency to the faculty into which it is infused, but the virtue itself represents a new faculty or quasi-faculty. For this reason the act of faith is in substance supernatural. The light of faith is a more perfect light than the light of natural reason, yet it does not obscure the brilliancy of the lesser light, but rather strengthens it. "The natural light of the understanding," writes St. Thomas, "is strengthened by the infusion of the gratuitous light of faith." [1] The understanding, being a cognitive faculty, is capable of receiving this additional light, though of itself it is incapable of any supernatural acts. Faith, then, does not merely intensify the act of understanding; it gives to the intellect a light of a new and distinct order. We may quote again the Angelic Doctor whose words serve to illus-

[1] *Sum. Theol.* P. 1. Q. XII. art. 13.

trate what happens when the mind is thus aided by faith. "If two lights be taken," he writes, "which are of the same order, the less is obscured by the greater (as the light of the sun obscures the light of a candle), since each of them acts as illuminator. If, on the contrary, two lights be taken of which the greater illuminates and the lesser is illuminated, then the lesser light is not obscured by the greater, but is rather increased, as the air is by the light of the sun." [1] As all substances are not diaphanous or suited, as air is, to serve as a medium of light, neither, in like manner, is every faculty adapted to receive the illuminating influence of faith. It is the obediential powers of our faculties, of which theologians speak, which make them responsive to supernatural influence.

The intellect responds to the light of faith, though not without supernatural aid, since it is a mere human faculty. It does so under the influence of the Holy Ghost. This movement of the Holy Spirit is accompanied by an illuminating grace; and this grace, which is operative in the initial stage of the supernatural life, is not perfect until sanctifying grace is infused into the soul. No gift or virtue is perfect until the will and understanding are in harmony with each other, and in their relations with the Eternal Truth and the Ultimate End. "But, in relation to the

[1] Ibid. P. iii. Q. IX. art. 1 ad 2.

Ultimate and Supernatural End," writes St. Thomas, "to which reason moves, according as it is actuated in a certain and imperfect way by the theological virtues, the motion of reason itself is not sufficient if there is not also an instinct or movement of the Holy Spirit, according to the words of St. Paul to the Romans:[1] 'Whosoever are led by the Spirit of God, they are the sons of God.'"[2]

Since faith brings the soul into direct relationship with God, it follows that faith is nobler and more perfect than any of the moral virtues which deal with human acts, and not immediately with God or the Ultimate Good Itself. The moral virtues are so influenced by faith, and are in consequence so elevated and spiritualized that by their aid human acts are directed to a supernatural end and become meritorious. To the influence of faith and the theological virtues in general are due the many differences which exist between the infused moral virtues and the acquired. The want of a higher relationship with God in the case of the acquired and natural virtues would explain why St. Augustine characterized the virtues of the Pagans as vices.[3] The person who is temperate for the sake of health does indeed acquire a control over his appetite, and, aided by the acquired habit of

[1] Rom. viii. 14.
[2] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LXVIII. art. 11.
[3] S. Aug., *Contra Julian*, lib. iv. c. 3.

temperance, can abstain from food or drink with promptitude and ease; yet such a habit, since it does not spring from faith, is not a perfect virtue, nor is it directed and governed by Christian prudence, nor warmed by charity. The infused moral virtues, therefore, have their foundation in the theological virtues, whereas the acquired natural virtues are merely grounded on the faculties of the human soul.

The mean is not determinable in faith as it is in the moral virtues. When perfect, the moral virtues take a middle course; and as they preserve those who possess them from sinning by excess so do they preserve them from sinning by defect. A person sins if he is intemperate in food or drink, but, if he abstain to excess, he may lose his health, and so neglect his duty. It is the virtue of prudence that balances the moral virtues. Prudence does not, however, exercise a like influence over the theological virtues since the latter, of their nature, exist before Christian prudence. Besides, there is no limit where there is question of the object of the theological virtues; for that object is God Who is Infinite Truth, Goodness, and Power. Accidentally, however, and on the part of the finite subject, there must be, from the nature of the case, a limitation to faith, hope and charity.

Since faith is a supernatural virtue, it does not essentially depend on any natural cause. The natural influences that precede this virtue

have no essential connexion with it. "By knowledge faith is cherished," writes the Angelic Doctor, "and it is nourished by means of external persuasion; but the chief and proper cause of faith is that which moves interiorly to the assent." [1] "As the Pelagians (or Semipelagians)," remarks the same holy Doctor, "made the free-will of a man the interior cause of faith, they said that the beginning of faith is from ourselves, whilst the perfection of faith is from God, by Whom the truths are proposed which we ought to believe." [2] This doctrine, adds the Angelic Doctor, is false and contrary to the teaching of St. Paul, who, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, says: "By grace you are saved through Christ, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God." [3]

God is the author and finisher of faith. We alone are the causes of our own infidelity. A powerful means for obtaining the gifts of God, and fidelity to grace, is prayer. The Psalmist says: "Da mihi intellectum ut sciam testimonia tua." Cardinal Newman felt this need when he wrote :—

"Lead, kindly Light, amid the encircling gloom,
Lead thou me on."

At the same time the fear of his own past infidelities haunted him, and so he prayed:

"Remember not past years."

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. VI. art. 1 ad 1.
[2] Ibid. in corp. art. [3] Eph. ii. 8.

The world knows how he reaped the fruit of his prayers, and so it is always with men of good-will. They are led by the Divine Light "o'er moor and fen, o'er crag and torrent, till the night is gone," until they attain to a closer union with the great Light, to a vision initiated by faith, the fruits of which "eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive." [1]

IV.

Since the actual possession of faith is of such inestimable value, it should be cherished, when once possessed, not only by the practice of virtue, but by acts of faith frequently elicited. The omission of an act of faith, even when obligatory, does not, however, deprive the soul of the virtue of faith, as some have erroneously thought. But if faith is allowed to remain inoperative there is danger of losing it; and the person who is guilty of carelessness in this respect easily lapses into sin, and perhaps into heresy.

A public profession of faith is, however, sometimes necessary; and St. Thomas tells us in general terms the reason of this obligation. "The end of faith," he writes, "like that of the other virtues, ought to be referred to charity,

[1] 1 Cor. ii. 9.

which is the love of God and the neighbour." [1] This obligation is, however, positive and does not bind, unless when by its omission "the honour due to God and the help which should be offered to the neighbour are withheld." [2]

The external act of faith is not elicited from a virtue which is distinct from, and under the control of, faith. The Angelic Doctor tells us that, "even though from interior faith, which is operative through love, the exterior acts of the other virtues are derived and are aided by those virtues in so far as they are under the control of faith, yet the confession (*of faith*) itself is elicited without the aid of another virtue." [3] And Gonet thus writes, "not only does the external faculty elicit its act, but the virtue of faith also (*elicits it*), although not *per se* and immediately, but mediately through its impression on the external faculty." [4]

The omission of an act of faith, when such an act is obligatory, weakens faith, but does not destroy it. Sin, by removing charity from the soul, retards in consequence the growth of faith. Immorality, therefore, leads imperceptibly to infidelity and unbelief. It must not be thought, however, that a series of sins, even when indefinitely prolonged, and which does not include an act of formal heresy or unbelief, destroys

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. III. art. 2. ad 1.
[2] Ibid. corp. art.
[3] Ibid. art 1. ad. 3.
[4] Clyp. Theol. Disp. vii. De actu exter. fid. art. 1.

faith. When faith ceases to exist in the soul its loss is traceable to one of three causes. It ceases, either on account of an act of formal heresy or unbelief, or by the retractation of the will, as in the reprobate, or because of the light of glory, as in the case of those who die and are saved. Faith, then, differs from charity which flows as a property from sanctifying grace and which depends upon that grace for its preservation. Faith is the foundation of the spiritual life and is, even as a virtue, independent of charity. It is not, however, perfect without charity and sanctifying grace.

Amongst the many errors of the pseudo-Reformation period there is one which makes faith and justification inseparable. Faith, the Reformers said, cannot exist without sanctifying grace and charity, so that when grace is lost faith also ceases to exist in the soul. This error was condemned by the Council of Trent in the following words: "If any person say that, when grace is lost, faith is also lost, or that the faith which remains, although not living, is not true faith, let him be anathema." [1] On this matter we have also the clear and explicit teaching of St. Paul. "And if I should have faith," writes the Apostle, "so that I could remove mountains, and have not charity, I am nothing." [2] It follows, therefore, that, when, by the loss of charity, a

[1] Sess. vi. can. 28. [2] 1 Cor. xiii. 2.

person forfeits all merit and the right to eternal life, faith may still remain.

It was the opinion of Durandus that faith may not be entirely destroyed by formal heresy.[1] But the Council of Trent teaches that faith is lost by an act of formal heresy or unbelief, just as charity is lost by sin. One mortal sin is enough to drive charity from the soul.[2] In like manner, since heresy is opposed to faith, just as sin of any kind is opposed to charity, a single act of formal heresy is sufficient to deprive the soul of faith. This truth is also taught by St. Paul when he tells us that a heretic "suffers shipwreck in faith."[3] Faith is lost, St. Thomas explains, by one act of formal heresy; and this happens even when a heretic denies only a single truth of revelation; for faith is regulated by one standard, which is the First Truth as proposed to us in Sacred Scripture and interpreted by the Church. He who denies one truth of faith falls from that standard, and so deflecting essentially from faith loses it altogether. The formal heretic refuses to recognize the Church as the Proximate Rule of faith when he wilfully rejects even one truth which he knows she teaches. But the teaching authority of the Church is a necessary condition for, even though it is not the motive of, faith. To refuse to obey her teaching is to exclude from faith a necessary condition,

[1] In 3. distinct. 23. q. 9. [2] Sess. vi. c 15. [3] 1 Tim. i. 19.

and therefore to make supernatural faith impossible. This, of course, applies only to formal heretics, or to those who wilfully reject an Article of Faith, or to those who are wilfully blind.

The view of Durandus, then, is at variance with the teaching of St. Thomas, and even with that of the Council of Trent. The formal heretic, according to the Angelic Doctor, not only rejects the doctrine of the Church, which is the Proximate Rule of faith, and therefore a necessary condition for the existence of that virtue, but by his heresy he rejects the formal object or motive of faith, which is the infallible authority of God. Durandus seemed to think that the formal object of faith can be divided, so that it may extend to some truths and not to all. But the motive of faith is one and indivisible, and therefore extends to all revealed truth or to none. Faith, in this respect, differs from the sciences. By reason of the mutual independence of the formal objects of the different branches of science it is possible to admit one scientific conclusion, and refuse to admit another which is equally true. This is impossible in faith, in which the formal object is one and indivisible.[1]

The fact that a formal heretic may still adhere to certain truths which objectively belong to faith in no way invalidates the foregoing conclusion. If a person habitually, and, therefore, with facility

[1] Gonet, O.P., Clyp. Theol. Disp. viii. De hab. fid. art. 11.

and readiness, adhere to certain truths, such as the doctrines of the Incarnation and the Trinity, though he refuses to believe in the doctrine of the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, the habit which prompts him to believe in the first two truths is only natural and acquired. Hence, such a person's faith is merely human and without merit, even though the material object of his belief is Divine.

Some writers have thought that the virtue of faith can be lost by an act of material heresy, such as is made by a person who, in invincible ignorance, denies a doctrine of Catholic faith.[1] This view is opposed to the almost unanimous teaching of Catholic theologians; for as grace is not lost by a material mortal sin when it is committed without knowledge of the law, neither is faith lost by an act of material heresy which is elicited in ignorance. Moreover, it seems absurd that faith should be lost without the commission of a deliberate mortal sin, especially when one remembers that in material heresy the elements that go to constitute faith still remain. Such a view would make salvation impossible, not merely to non-Catholics who happen to be in good faith, but also to those Catholics who may unconsciously assent to what is heretical. Suarez, therefore, justly considers this opinion to be so erroneous as to be beneath discussion.[2]

[1] Cf. Brownson's Works, vol. v. p. 572.
[2] Suarez, S.J., *De Gratia*, lib. xi. c. vii. 4, 5.

There can be only one normal cause of the loss of faith in those who are members of the Church of Christ on earth. It ceases to exist in the soul when the person possessing it elicits a culpable act of heresy or unbelief.

In connexion with this loss of faith there is a point which bears on the relation existing between faith and theology which should not be overlooked. We hear it sometimes said that the heretical sects have not presented to the world a complete system of theology. The explanation usually given is, that since one or more important truths of faith are rejected by heretics, and consequently the authority of the Church, it is impossible for them to build up a scientific system of theology. When some truths are rejected unity of belief is impossible, and consequently scientific exposition. Certain conclusions, it is said, may be deduced by heretics from the truths which they admit, yet the rejection of other truths so retards scientific progress that the reasoner, finding it impossible to meet in fair argument the difficulties which confront him, rests satisfied with opinions which are, for the most part, vague and uncertain, which contain indeed tentative suggestions, but no logical or scientific solution of his difficulties. This view of the question must appeal to those who read any of the theological articles in non-Catholic periodicals. Those articles contain for the most part little matter beyond what springs from the religious consciousness of

the writer, so that Protestant theology is often, chameleon like, made to change, to suit the religious emotions or point of view of an individual writer. There is, however, another explanation of the non-existence of a sound theological system among non-Catholics and it is—want of faith. It is impossible to make a theologian of a person who is without faith. "Neither in the reprobate," writes Gonet, "nor in those who, though still on earth, are heretics, can there be a habit of true theology, but only something equivalent and like to theology";[1] and Gatti writes: "With Protestants and the other heretical sects, a science which is truly theological cannot exist."[2]

V.

The Catholic who dies in mortal sin, and who possesses faith until the last moment of his life, loses it by eternal reprobation. It is impossible that faith, which is a supernatural virtue and the foundation of the spiritual life of the soul, should remain in the damned soul in the reprobate state in which it unfortunately finds itself after death.

Durandus held the view that the souls of the faithful who die in mortal sin retain the faith even in their reprobation, if it is not lost before death.

[1] Gonet, O.P., Clyp. Theol. Disp. viii. De hab. fid. art. ii. cor. 3.
[2] Gatti, O.P., *Instit. Apologet. Polem.* c. iii. De Christianismo prout est religio, conclusio vi.

But faith may be lost, not merely by an act of formal heresy or unbelief made during life, but may also be lost by the habitual retractation of the will after death, since the influence of the will is necessary for the preservation of faith, as it is for its production. When the motion of the will is withdrawn faith is driven from the soul, just as light is excluded from a substance which ceases to be diaphanous. Besides, the reprobate are not even potentially members of Christ's Mystical Body. But if they possess supernatural faith, even though their faith is imperfect, they are, not merely potentially, but actually, members of His Mystical Body. Moreover, as the reprobate cannot perform meritorious works, the virtue of faith would in them be fruitless; and even though they possess a certain kind of faith, it is not supernatural. It is induced from certain signs of the truths of revelation; for Christians who are lost can still remember the motives of credibility, and they can also know that souls are eternally lost because of infidelity and heresy.

As in the devils, so also in the reprobate souls, natural faith exists, as it were, by compulsion. This compulsion does not entirely destroy volition. The merchant, who is forced in a storm to cast his goods into the sea, does so under compulsion, yet he does so freely. In a somewhat similar way certain revealed truths are so connected with the signs of their credibility as to force those who recognize the signs to voluntarily assent to the

truths, even though it be with reluctance; hence the Angelic Doctor writes: "The faith of the devils is, by reason of the evidence of the signs, in a certain sense compulsory." [1] But even such an assent is not a morally good act. The acts of the reprobate are all mortal sins, since their will in reference to the end or motive of each particular action is defective. Although God's creatures cannot indeed become completely depraved—for, as long as they possess the being which He gave them, a natural tendency to what is good is ever associated with that being—yet the natural tendencies in the reprobate to what is good on the part of the object are vitiated by a bad intention. Their acts are therefore formally evil, even when the proximate object is good.[2] Moreover, when faith is lost, the spring of the supernatural life ceases. Nothing remains, then, to distinguish bad Christians and Catholics who lose their souls from those who have never possessed the gift of faith, but the sacramental character in those who have been baptized, and the culpable privation of faith in those who once possessed it. This loss is not experienced by the souls in Purgatory, who still possess supernatural faith, and who still hope for eternal life.

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. V. art. 2 ad 1.
[2] Gonet, O.P., loc. cit. art. 2. §. iii. ad 5.

VI.

The third cause of the withdrawal of faith from the soul is the presence of the light of glory in the blessed. This light is the perfection of faith. It is, however, a perfection of such a kind that faith cannot exist along with it. St. Thomas, referring to the opposition which exists between what is perfect and what is imperfect, thus writes: "An imperfection belongs in certain cases to the essence of a thing, and so pertains to its specific nature; just as the absence of reason belongs to the specific nature of a horse . . . hence it follows that when the imperfection is removed, the essence of the thing itself disappears." [1] In eternal beatitude the essence of faith disappears. The imperfect nature of the knowledge which, because of the obscurity of the object, results from faith, is of the essence of faith. The perfection, therefore, of the beatific vision implies an essential change. "We now," writes St. Paul, "see through a glass in a dark manner, but then face to face." [2]

Faith, then, and the beatific vision cannot exist together in the same person. St. Thomas tells us that "faith of its nature possesses an imperfection on the part of the subject which requires that the person believing should not see the thing in which he believes; beatitude, however, has of its nature a perfection on the part

[1] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LXVII. art. 3. [2] 1 Cor. xiii. 12.

of the subject which requires that the person possessing it should see that by which he is blessed; hence it is impossible that faith and beatitude remain together in the same subject." [1]

The light of glory is a permanent quality infused by God into the souls of the blessed. As a quality it excludes the virtue of faith. But if the beatific vision is granted to a person before death, as it was to St. Paul, such a vision, being transient and not springing from a permanent quality, does not remove the virtue of faith.[2] During its continuance, however, it is impossible to elicit an act of faith. It is not the act of vision, then, but the habit or the light of glory which makes the possession of the virtue of faith impossible. A transient element can remain in certain circumstances in which the existence of a permanent element of the same nature would be impossible. Just as a spiritual quality cannot exist permanently in a corporeal substance, yet, if the spiritual element is not a permanent quality, it may be contained in a corporeal substance in a transient way; thus the Sacraments, which are material signs, contain a transient spiritual efficacy.[3] In a similar way the light of glory bestowed on St. Paul, as it was not a permanent quality, could remain with the virtue of faith.

[1] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LXVII. art. 3.
[2] Ibid. IIa. IIae. Q. CLXXV. art. 3 ad 3.
[3] Ibid. P. III. Q. LXII. art. 4.

Although faith ceases to exist in the souls of the blessed, yet the moral virtues, even though they are less perfect than faith, remain as an ornament in the souls of the blessed after death. These virtues are free from certain imperfections peculiar to the virtue of faith whose object is obscure. Faith cannot be an ornament of the soul in heaven. When, therefore, the Fathers refer to the continuance of faith in the souls of the blessed, they refer to what is generic in faith, or to what is common to faith and the beatific vision. In an essential change a generic element must remain; thus, for example, if an irrational animal should become rational its specific nature is changed, but not its generic. Faith and the beatific vision contain a common generic element. Both imply a knowledge of God in Himself. Theological science, therefore, remains in paradise; for theological science is based on the principles of supernatural knowledge, not indeed because they are obscure, but inasmuch as they are certain. Theological knowledge is not only scientific but is deductive, even in relation to supernatural truth as it is possessed in the beatific vision. Hence theology, even here on earth, is a science which is said to be subordinate to that of the blessed in Heaven.

If it happen that the blessed know certain truths, of which they have not intuitive knowledge, their knowledge of such truths is not faith. Faith cannot exist unless it extends

to its primary object which is the First Truth. This is impossible in the beatific vision, where God is clearly seen by the blessed, although they do not comprehend Him. Non-intuitive knowledge in Heaven cannot, therefore, be called faith unless in a metaphorical sense; just as the desire which the blessed have for the glory of their bodies, and in which they are said to hope for the Resurrection, is not really hope in the theological sense. When the primary and formal objects of a virtue cease to influence, the virtue itself must cease to exist. Our Lord, Who while on earth enjoyed the beatific vision, and possessed intuitive knowledge of the primary object of faith, could not, in consequence, possess the virtue of faith. In like manner, when He desired the glory of His body, and the exaltation of His Name, His desires were not acts of the virtue of hope. As the primary object of faith is God, inasmuch as He is not seen in Himself, but as He is known to us by revelation, so the primary object of hope is God, not as He is possessed, but as He is attainable through grace and trust in His promises.

VII.

At first sight it may seem difficult to understand how faith may be lost, since its certitude is metaphysical. Faith brings with it greater

certitude than prudence or any of the arts whose objects, being contingent things, are not necessary and eternal. The certitude of faith is even greater than that of truths of science or philosophy. Yet it may be lost more easily than the principles of human knowledge, or the natural and metaphysical sciences. Faith necessarily depends on the motion of the will; and the will may refuse to move to the assent; or it may withdraw the assent if it is already given. But in the sciences, in which the objects are not obscure, the mind is moved to the assent without this dependence on the will.

Even wisdom, understanding, and knowledge, whether considered as gifts of the Holy Ghost, or as acquired habits, bring to the mind, absolutely speaking, less certitude than faith: if gifts, they depend on faith; if acquired habits, they depend for their certitude on principles which, although metaphysical and necessary, are withal only natural. Although faith depends for its certitude on the infallible authority of God, nevertheless, when considered in relation to the human mind, it is less convincing than acquired knowledge, wisdom or understanding. The latter are proportioned to a limited intelligence, whereas the object of supernatural faith transcends the limits of mere created intelligence. For this reason faith necessarily depends on the motion of the will under the influence of grace, and may therefore be lost; whereas knowledge, whether

immediate or scientific, is the result of an assent in which the object is the sole mover, and which, independent of the motion of the will, gives certitude to the act.

The certitude which results from the supernatural gifts of Wisdom, Understanding, Knowledge and Counsel depends on the certitude of faith. These gifts excel faith inasmuch as they give to the person who possesses them a certain spiritual perception. St. Thomas thus writes: "The perfection of Understanding and Knowledge exceeds the knowledge arising from faith in so far as they give a keener perception of the object than faith, although a more intense adherence to the object arises from faith." [1]

Since faith refers primarily to the First Truth, but extends, secondarily, to creatures and even to the affairs of human life, the points of difference which discriminate the various gifts from one another may be understood from this varied relationship of faith. The Angelic Doctor thus writes: "Two things are required on our part in regard to those matters which are proposed for our belief: in the first place they should be presented to, and understood by, the intellect; in the second place a person should have a correct judgment concerning them, so that he may consider the truths to which he must adhere and (the errors) which he should avoid. This

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. IV. art. 8 ad 3.

judgment, when exercised on Divine things, pertains to the gift of Wisdom; if exercised on created things, it belongs to the gift of Science; when there is question of its application to individual works, it belongs to the gift of Counsel." [1]

The gifts of the Holy Ghost cannot exist, at least efficaciously and in their fullness, without charity and sanctifying grace. The connexion between these gifts and charity is repeatedly referred to by the Angelic Doctor. He thus writes of the gift of Understanding: "Unless the human intellect be so moved by the Holy Ghost as to have a correct estimate of the Ultimate End it has not yet received the gift of Understanding." [2] It is only the person possessing sanctifying grace and charity who can have a proper estimate of his Last End; and therefore the Angelic Doctor writes: "The gift of Wisdom responds to charity which unites the mind of man to God"; [3] hence when charity and the grace of God are lost, those gifts are lost through which the Christian has such a keen insight into the truths of faith.

Purity of heart disposes the soul to receive these gifts, and although without charity the soul is only partially turned from the love of the world, yet faith begins the good work. "A rational creature," writes St. Thomas, "is of more worth than all temporal and corporeal

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. VIII. art. 6.
[2] Ibid. Q. VIII. art. 5. [3] Ibid. Q. IX. art. 2 ad 1.

creatures, and therefore it becomes unclean, if, influenced by love, it subjects itself to temporal things. From this uncleanness it is purified by a contrary movement, when it tends to that which is above itself, namely, to God, and in this movement faith is the fundamental guiding principle. . . . The fundamental principle, therefore, in the purification of the heart is faith." [1]

There is a close connexion, then, between faith, the gifts of the Holy Ghost and purity of heart. "Do not try to understand," St. Augustine writes, "in order to believe, but believe in order that you may understand, for understanding is the reward of faith." But for the gift of Understanding, as well as for the other gifts, purity of heart is an essential. "Blessed are the clean of heart," said Our Lord, "for they shall see God."

In the cleansing of the heart, faith is the prime mover; hence purity of heart, rooted in faith, prepares the way for the gifts of the Holy Ghost. If the sinner then has no relish for spiritual things, and is without spiritual perception, it is because his heart is corrupt. But while faith remains it still tends to move men to the higher, nobler, and more spiritual life. "What is there," writes St. Bernard, "which faith does not find? it attains to things inaccessible, and lays hold on things unknown . . . in its vast bosom it, in some way, enfolds eternity itself."

[1] Ibid. Q. VII. art. 2.

CHAPTER II.

Faith and Reason.

I.

The truths of revelation, though not intrinsically evident, appeal to reason for proof of their credibility. Catholics believe that faith is not based upon philosophic truth, but upon revelation; and yet they hold that the Church possesses the power to condemn systems of philosophy and scientific theories which impede the acceptance of revelation, or which tamper with the *preambula* of faith. Faith and science, then, although distinct, are not exclusive; and phenomena, especially religious and Christian, cannot be isolated and so cut off from the domain of faith as to allow the philosopher or historian to freely assert what the believer denies. Pius X. has therefore condemned the following propositions: "Opposition can exist and really does exist between the facts related in Sacred Scripture and the dogmas of the Church resting on them, so that facts which the Church believes to be most certain may be rejected by a critic as false" [1]; and "from the ecclesiastical judgments and censures passed against free and more

[1] Prop. 23. *Syllabus of Condemned Propositions*, July 3rd, 1907.

scholarly exegesis, it can be gathered that the faith proposed by the Church contradicts history"; [1] and again, "since only revealed truths are contained in the Deposit of Faith, under no respect does it pertain to the Church to pass judgment on the assertions of human science." [2]

The philosophers and scientists who claim that their theories should be independent of revelation and faith may indeed pretend that they are willing to concede to faith and revelation an independence similar to that which they advocate for science and philosophy. But, as a matter of fact, they make faith subject to science. When a conflict arises between faith and science, faith must yield, they say, since, in such a crisis, it can, and does trespass; on the hallowed ground of science. Pius X., in his condemnation of Modernism, refers to the matter thus: "And if we should ask further whether Christ really worked miracles and truly foresaw the future, whether He really rose from the dead and ascended into Heaven, agnostic science will offer a denial, faith will answer in the affirmative. Yet even in this there will be no conflict between them: for the one will answer negatively, speaking as a philosopher to philosophers, and considering Christ only according to historic reality; the other will affirm, speaking as a believer to believers,

[1] Prop. 3. [2] Prop. 5.

and believing Christ as He is lived again by faith and in faith." The Holy Father goes on to say that "one might conclude from these statements that faith and science are so independent of each other, that neither can under any consideration be subjected to the other. . . . The inference, indeed, will be correct and true as far as the independence of science is concerned. With faith it is another matter." [1]

The Agnostic philosopher cuts the ground from under faith, and makes a reasonable acceptance of it impossible. He rejects the *preambula* of faith and the motives of belief as well as the fact of revelation itself. If the Agnostic claims to be a Catholic Modernist, he continues, indeed, to use Catholic terms, and to speak of motives of belief and of revelation, but at the same time he denies the truth which these terms convey to the orthodox believer. When the *preambula* of faith are denied, and the truths of natural theology also, then motives of belief and revelation become—so far at least as traditional teaching is concerned—mere names. If asked for an explanation of the nature of the motives of faith and of revelation, the Modernist appeals to his religious consciousness, and to vital immanence, where God, he says, is present, revealing Himself and awakening to consciousness the religious

[1] Encycl. *Pascendi*.

sentiment of the soul. To him God is otherwise unknown. But the Vatican Council teaches: "If anyone shall say that the only true God, our Creator and Lord, cannot, through those things which have been made, be certainly known by the natural light of human reason, let him be anathema." [1]

II.

Before the acceptance of the truths of revelation reason can prepare the way for faith, or the assent to faith, remotely and proximately: remotely, inasmuch as reason, when properly exercised, in developing the first principles of knowledge, and in arranging the *preambula* of faith, lays the foundation necessary for a reasonable acceptance of revelation; proximately, when, moved by the motives of credibility, the intellect assents to the credibility of revealed truth.

A sound system of philosophy, then, which deals with God, the universe, with matter and mind, with the origin of life, the spirituality and immortality of the soul, and the freedom of the will, is of paramount importance as a remote preparation for faith. Leo XIII., therefore, writes: "Philosophy, if rightly made use of by the wise, in a certain way tends to smooth and fortify the road to true faith, and to prepare the souls of its disciples for the fit reception of

[1] Revelation, Can. i.

revelation; for which reason it is well called by ancient writers, sometimes a stepping-stone to the Christian faith,[1] sometimes the prelude and help of Christianity,[2] sometimes the Gospel teacher."[3] And the same learned Pontiff, referring to the writings of St. Thomas, further adds: "Clearly distinguishing, as is fitting, reason from faith, while happily associating the one with the other, he [St. Thomas] both preserved the rights and had regard for the dignity of each; so much so, indeed, that reason, borne on the wings of Thomas to its human height, can scarcely rise higher, while faith could scarcely expect more or stronger aids from reason than those which she has already obtained through Thomas."[4]

As true philosophy prepares the way for faith, so false systems of philosophy and pseudo-science serve to close the avenues of thought and reason against the acceptance of the supernatural. Leo XIII., in referring to the philosophy of the eighteenth century, thus writes: "It turned to ridicule the Sacred Canon of the Scriptures, and rejected the entire system of revealed truths, with the purpose of being able alternately to root out from the conscience of the people all religious belief, and stifling within it the last breath of the spirit of Christianity. It is from this source that have flowed Rationalism,

[1] Clem. Alex. Strom. lib. 1. c. 16; I. VII. c. 3.
[2] Orig. ad Greg. Thaum.
[3] Clem. Alex. Strom. 1. c. 5.
[4] Encycl. *Aeterni Patris.*

Pantheism, Naturalism, and Materialism—poisonous and destructive systems — which, under different appearances, renew the ancient errors triumphantly refuted by the Fathers and Doctors of the Church ; so that the pride of modern times, by excessive confidence in its own lights, was stricken with blindness, and like Paganism, subsisted thenceforth on fancies, even concerning the attributes of the human soul and the immortal destinies which constitute our glorious heritage." [1]

Kant and his followers attempted to confine revelation and the truths of faith within the sphere of the *noumena* or transcendentals of which the speculative reason can tell us nothing ; hence arose that immoderate spirit of criticism, scepticism, and unbelief which is so much in evidence in the works of the Biblical Rationalists, and to which is traceable, in great measure, the modern tendency to scoff at the supernatural and the miracles of Christ. On the other hand, Materialists and Sensists have failed to discriminate sufficiently between sense and intellect, with the result that, in their theories, the science of Psychology is rejected, or at least psychological phenomena are explained in terms of Physiology or Phrenology, while Fatalism and Determinism have revived and appeared in recent years under new forms.

[1] Review of His Pontificate, March 19, 1902.

The rejection of free-will led to the rejection of the principles of the science of Ethics, with the result that not only are faith, religion and morality rendered impossible, but also all human responsibility and duty. Yet the pseudo-Reformers denied even the doctrine of free-will. It was a gift, they said, bestowed on man in the State of Innocence, and was therefore forfeited by the Fall; so that human nature is now so corrupt that man is ever governed by an overmastering tendency to evil. This tendency he is unable to resist or control. The same views were held—at least in part—by Jansen,[1] Baius,[2] and Quesnel;[3] while Kant, who did not actually deny the existence of free-will, preferred to consign this truth, like that of the immortality of the soul and the existence of God, to a place outside the sphere of phenomena, so that, when examined in the light of the pure reason, its existence appears to be merely problematic.

Other theories which exclude faith are Materialistic Positivism, which circumscribes the world of reality to what is merely sensible, and Agnostic Positivism, which neither affirms nor denies the existence of an immaterial world, but refuses to concede to reason the power of transcending the phenomena of sense. In the Philosophy of Immanence, and in Voluntarism, the same power is also denied to reason, yet the

[1] Prop. 3. [2] Props. 39, 40, 41, 66. [3] Props. 38, 39.

want is supplied by an undue elevation of the appetites through which man can attain to things which are beyond the phenomena of sense. Mystic Sentimentalism, especially in the extreme forms in which it was advanced by Jacobi, De Wette, and Schleiermacher, tends to isolate religious truth, and cut it off from the domain of reason.[1] Jacobi even considered reason an obstacle to the acquirement of religious truth. Böhme, Swedenborg, and other religious sentimentalists of a like calibre, attempted, without the genuine aids of reason and intellect, a reconstruction of religion, so that their views may be said to represent that low and erroneous form of mysticism, in which religion is refused an intellectual basis, and in which the historic Christ becomes a non-essential in faith and religion.

It seems paradoxical that non-Catholics, who exaggerate so much the capabilities of reason and private judgment in interpreting supernatural truth, should refuse to concede to faith a real foundation in reason. Yet they really refuse it such a foundation, and the truth of the statement can be verified by anyone who observes how unwilling non-Catholics are, as a rule, to use their reason as a test of their faith. Some of them consider it even wrong and sinful to use their reason in this way. Their attitude in this matter is in

[1] Perrone, S.J., *Praelect. Theol.*, P. iii. sect. i. c. i. *De Rat. ante Fid. spect.*

itself a sufficient proof that their faith rests on a non-intellectual basis.[1]

It is necessary, then, that people think soundly on those truths which serve as a preliminary to the acceptance of faith; for, wherever true philosophy is neglected, faith must suffer. Unfortunately, the modern tendency outside the Catholic Church seems to be to accept any views on philosophy, even though they are irreconcilable with an orthodox outlook on Christianity. This tendency is very much, if not altogether, due to the influence of heresy. Beginning in revolt against the authority of the Church, heresy has become in time the fruitful source of false and erroneous opinions on natural religion and Ethics. Leo XIII., in referring to the fruits of the pseudo-Reformation of the sixteenth century, thus writes: "It pleased the struggling innovators of the sixteenth century to philosophize without any respect for faith, the power of inventing in accordance with his own pleasure and heart being asked and given in turn by each one. Hence, it was natural that systems of philosophy multiplied beyond measure, and conclusions differing and clashing, one with another, arose even about those matters which are the most important in human knowledge." [2]

[1] Cf. *Faith and Reason in relation to Conversion to the Church*: Frederick Willis, in *Irish Ecclesiastical Record*, March, 1912.

[2] Encycl. *Aeterni Patris*.

It is sad to think that Catholics are found who are so ignorant or so distrustful of Scholasticism, and of the older methods of defence, as to appropriate, in the apparent interests of faith and religion, new and ephemeral theories of philosophy, and who thereby unduly compromise, if they do not actually abandon, principles which cannot be relinquished without error on the most important matters of human life. Leo XIII. thus refers to the mistaken views of such Catholics: "But as men are apt to follow the lead given them, this new pursuit seems to have caught the souls of certain Catholic philosophers, who, throwing aside the patrimony of ancient wisdom, chose rather to build up a new edifice than to strengthen and complete the old by aid of the new. . . . And if perchance it (the new system) sometimes finds itself scarcely equal to sustain the shock of its foes, it should recognize that the cause and the blame lie in itself." [1]

Of these misguided Catholic philosophers some, distrusting the unaided testimony of the individual reason, have appealed to revelation and tradition, and to the testimony of the universal consent of mankind, as the highest criterion of truth, and therefore as a test of all truth. Apart from the practical inefficiency of such a criterion, its admission unduly minimizes the native powers of the mind and of individual

[1] Encycl. *Aeterni Patris.*

reason to prove with certainty the existence of God. It is also at variance with the teaching of St. Paul,[1] and with that of the Catholic Church.[2] Besides, if authority in any form is accepted as the ultimate test of truth, there is no criterion by which to test authority itself.

The Dualistic Spiritualism of Descartes, the Ontologism and Occasionalism of Malebranche, De Lamenais' theory on the supreme value of the Collective Reason, the Traditionalism of De Bonald, as well as the Fideism of Bonnetty and Ventura, militate against the worth of individual reason as a test of the supernatural, and of the due acceptance of faith. Yet, "the attempt to discredit individual reason could not but result in the discredit of religion, so that, far from curing religious indifference, philosophical indifference was calculated to aggravate the evil." [3] This is also the testimony of the Church in its condemnation of Traditionalism, of which more shall be said in this chapter, where it is represented as the antithesis of Rationalism, between which and Traditionalism itself the golden mean is to be found, a mean which even Semi-Rationalists, such as Hermes [4] and Gunther,[5] failed to discover.

To individual reason, then, we must concede

[1] Rom. i. 19, 20: [2] Conc. Vat. *De Revelatione*, Can. 1.
[3] Turner, *History of Philosophy—Traditionalism*, p. 606.
[4] Cf. Prohib. op. Hermes per Breve Gregorii XVI., Sept. 1835.
[5] Cf. Breve Pii IX. de lib. et doct. Guentheri ad Card. Archiepisc. Coloniens. 15 June, 1857.

the physical capacity of demonstrating those truths which serve to give faith a solid and intellectual basis; and it amounts to a begging of the question to assert that a person should be obliged to accept the same truths on faith alone; hence, in the first thesis to which the Traditionalist Bautain subscribed in 1840, we read that "reason can prove with certainty the existence of God; that faith is a heavenly gift, posterior to revelation, and cannot, therefore, be suitably appealed to, against the Atheist, for a proof of the existence of God." [1] In the other propositions to which the same writer subscribed we read that reason can prove the certainty of Mosaic revelation; [2] that the cogency of the proof of Christian revelation, based on the miracles of Christ, has not diminished through lapse of time; [3] and that arguments from Tradition are not wanting to prove the Resurrection of Christ.[4]

III.

As reason influences the believer remotely—inasmuch as it proves the *preambula* of faith—so does it influence him proximately, when he accepts faith and revealed truth through the motives of credibility. As the individual reason can acquire certitude, and even metaphysical certitude, of the *preambula* of faith, such as the

[1] Prop. 1 of Theses to which Bautain subscribed. 8 Sept., 1840.
[2] Prop. 2 ibid. [3] Prop. 3 ibid. [4] Prop. 4 ibid.

existence of God and His Attributes, so can it also acquire certitude of the credibility of the Mysteries of Faith, whether the certitude is that of an eye-witness—as when one sees a miracle wrought in proof of revealed truth—or whether it is certitude depending on historical evidence. In either case the certitude excludes the possibility of error, or at least of prudent doubt; and the believer can, with freedom from such doubt, associate the evidences with the truths of revelation. For such a result even a number of converging facts, each of which alone may give only probability on the main issue, can, when taken together, be sufficiently strong to establish moral certitude on the same issue.[1]

If individual reason were incapable of acquiring certitude of the *preambula* of faith, and the motives of credibility, then apologists might appeal to men in vain in their defence of Christianity, and indeed the Apostles could not have supported their claims before an infidel world, nor could Our Lord have bound men under pain of reprobation to accept His teaching. St. Thomas tells us that "men would not believe, but for the evidence of the signs, or on account of some other motive."

These motives or signs must be extraordinary or supernatural, since the Mysteries of Faith to which they lead exceed the capacity of human

[1] Cf. Newman, *Grammar of Assent. Certitude, Inference, passim.*

reason. These signs, it is true, do not make the truths of faith evident, but they appeal to the believer in such a way as to make the truths evidently credible, or worthy of acceptance on the authority of Him Who alone can supply men with sufficient evidence of the credibility of supernatural truth. The Angelic Doctor writes: "Since those things which are of faith exceed human reason, they cannot be proved by human arguments, and therefore it is necessary that they be proved by a manifestation of the Divine Power." [1] The miracles of Christ and His Apostles provide us with at least moral certitude of the credibility of the doctrines which they preached, so that Christian apologists can say with St. Peter: "We have not followed cunningly-devised fables, when we made known to you the power and presence of Our Lord Jesus Christ." [2]

As we have evident signs of God's authority, which is the motive of our faith, so have we signs of the Church's authority in the exercise of which the truths of faith are safeguarded and explained. Such an authority Christ was bound to leave us, since He commanded us to believe not merely one or two truths, but the truths of revelation in their fullness and integrity.[3] The Church has been left by Christ as the city on the mountain-top which cannot be hid.

[1] *Sum. Theol.* P. iii. Q. XLIII. art. 1.
[2] 2 Peter i. 16.
[3] Matt. xxviii. 20; cf. John xvi. 13-15.

Her miracles, her work, her indefectibility, her organization, her unity, sanctity, catholicity, and apostolicity appeal to reason, and are sufficient to convince men of her Divine origin.[1] For this reason the Vatican Council teaches that, on account of her marvellous sanctity and wonderful fecundity, together with her universality, unity, and stability, the Catholic Church furnishes men with an indisputable testimony of her Divine mission.[2]

IV.

Although Divine faith, like the other supernatural gifts which God bestows on men, is a favour, it is not a favour which we are free to accept or reject at pleasure. It is a gift bestowed under Divine precept, and hence the liberty of conscience, independence or indifference which are claimed by those who are unwilling to believe, is nothing less than an abuse of liberty, and, if persevered in, must lead to eternal perdition.[3] Non-Catholics, are, therefore, bound to find out God's will in this matter, and salvation is impossible to him who deliberately refuses to follow the light which he receives. One does not escape from this obligation on the pretext that

[1] Cf. Pius IX., Encycl. *Qui Pluribus*; Leo XIII., Encycl. *Satis Cognitum*.

[2] Const. Dogm. de Fid. Cathol. c. 3.

[3] Cf. Pius IX., Encycl. *Quanta Cura*, an. 1864.

reason should be independent, and that it is a violation of the natural rights of man to subject him to the yoke of faith; for, since man depends entirely on God, created reason should be completely subject to Uncreated Truth. [1] The Angelic Doctor teaches that "the Divine Law so directs man as to completely subject him to God; and as man is subject to God through his will in loving, so should he be subject through his intellect in believing." [2] Besides, the claim set up for the independence of reason and intellect is fallacious; for reason and faith are so connected that the wilful refusal to accept revelation violates the laws of reason. The motives of credibility appeal to reason, as does also their connexion with revealed truth; and St. Thomas tells us "that just as it would be the height of madness if a person should declare that those truths, which are taught by philosophy, are false because he himself cannot understand them, so would it be even greater foolishness for a person to imagine that those things which, through the ministry of angels, are divinely revealed, are false, because, forsooth, they are unintelligible to human reason." [3]

God can, in all justice, command men to embrace faith, as He actually does in the words

[1] Concil. Vat. Const. de Fid. c. 3.
[2] *Cont. Gent.* Lib. iii. c. 118.
[3] Ibid. Lib. i. c. 3. Cf. Balmes, *Protestantism and Catholicism Compared*, vol. i. c. 5.

of St. John, in which He tells us that, "this is His commandment, that we should believe in the name of His Son Jesus Christ." [1] From this command follows the obligation to inquire what that faith is, lest, as Pius IX. teaches, "human reason in a matter of such importance be deceived and fall into error." [2]

Faith does not impose a harsh yoke on man, but ennobles and enriches him with the knowledge of the sublimest and most elevating of truths. It imparts to him a knowledge of things which it is proper to God alone to know, and it prepares him to know them hereafter in a more perfect manner, when he shall see God face to face. Even the Pagan Aristotle thought that man should, as far as in him lies, know the things which are immortal and divine. He tells us that even though man knows little of what belongs to the higher order of *being*, yet what he does know he loves and desires more than he can ever love or desire the things of a lower and inferior order of which he may possess a greater knowledge.[3] Moreover, faith preserves men from error concerning natural truth; and as a correct knowledge of truth is necessary as a preparation for faith, so faith, when acquired, preserves men from yielding to those errors which, even remotely, militate against revealed religion. Leo XIII.,

[1] 1 John iii. 23.
[2] Encycl. *Qui pluribus*.
[3] Cf. St. Thom. *Cont. Gent.* Lib. i. c. 5.

in referring to the errors which impregnate the writings of scientists and philosophers who are without faith, thus writes: "The philosophers of old who lacked the gift of faith, yet were esteemed so wise, fell into many appalling errors. You know how often among some truths they taught false and incongruous things; what vague and doubtful opinions they held concerning the nature of the Divinity, the first origin of things, the government of the world, the Divine Knowledge of the future, the cause and principle of evil, the ultimate end of man, the eternal beatitude, concerning virtue and vice, and other matters, a true and certain knowledge of which is most necessary to the human race." [1] These words of Leo XIII. are applicable to many of the philosophers of to-day.

V.

St. Thomas tells us that human reason may be perfected not only by the light which it has from nature, but also by a supernatural perfection divinely infused. The first is possessed more perfectly than the second, since it is of its nature inseparable from the subject. The second is, in itself, the greater perfection, though it may be lost by a voluntary act of infidelity. The possession of the first is full

[1] Encycl. *Aeterni Patris.*

and perfect; that of the second is imperfect, for we know and love God in an imperfect way." [1] Again, the Angelic Doctor teaches that before the assent to faith is made, the truths of revelation must be proposed mediately or immediately by God: "For those things which pertain to faith exceed the limits of human reason, so that they cannot be known by man unless they are revealed by God. But to some, as to the Apostles and Prophets, they are revealed immediately by God; to others, they are proposed by God through the ministry of His preachers, according to the saying of the Apostle: 'How shall they preach unless they be sent?'" [2]

Since God adapts His gifts to the needs of His creatures the necessity of revelation should alone point to its accomplishment; and, if He has spoken to men, He must have done it in such a way that the rejection of revealed truth can be traced to the unreasonable attitude of the unbeliever. But for the acceptance of revelation not only is the manifestation of truth on the part of God required, but also Divine grace, for without grace the assent to faith is impossible. The circumstances attending active revelation, such as miracles and prophecy, contribute to make the assent to revealed truth reasonable; the gift of God's grace makes the act of faith supernatural.

[1] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LXVIII. art. 2.
[2] Ibid. IIa. IIae. Q. VI. art. 1.

In general, therefore, two distinct influences are brought to bear on the assent to faith—the one moral and external, the other physical and internal. As the second supposes the first, so the first is without practical fruit unless aided by the second. "As regards . . . the assent to those things which are of faith," writes the Angelic Doctor, "a twofold cause can be considered; one influencing externally, as, for example, a miracle or the persuasive words of a preacher. These two are not, however, a sufficient cause, for, of those who see one and the same miracle or hear the same sermon, some believe, and others do not believe; consequently, it is necessary to assign another and internal cause which moves a person interiorly to those things which pertain to faith." [1] The internal cause is most important, since it is identified with the supernatural motion of grace. The external cause gives faith a foundation in reason; hence the Angelic Doctor adds that "faith proceeds from knowledge and is strengthened and fortified by the exterior motives arising from science, but the principal and proper cause of faith is that which moves interiorly to the assent." [2] Those words of St. Thomas are in keeping with the doctrines of the Church as expressed by the Vatican Council. The Council teaches that God, in order that the assent to faith be reasonable, willed

[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. ad I.

that the external proofs of revelation should be united to the internal aids of the Holy Ghost.[1]

It is possible, then, for a person to perceive speculatively the reasonableness of faith, and yet allow his practical reason and will to remain in opposition. The Scribes and Pharisees might have seen the reasonableness of Christ's claims; the withholding of Divine grace by which they would have become followers of Christ is traceable to their unwillingness to believe. We have examples of a somewhat kindred state of mind in sinners. One may meet with a drunkard who is most eloquent in denouncing the evils of drink, and yet persistent in his drunken habits. His abhorrence of drunkenness may be real, but it is not efficacious. He sees the reasonableness of temperance, but he does not wish to practise it. In like manner, to infidels and heretics the claims of faith may appear justifiable, though their practical reason and will remain inactive, from prejudice, cowardice, or some other unworthy motive. "Thus, I should say," writes Mr. Ward, "that it would be the abstract wish for knowledge which would make a mind sensitive to the *prima facie* notes of the Church; which would prevent any unconsciously dishonest blinking of facts telling for her; which would note with quick eye her works, her system, her actions,

[1] Conc. Vat. Sess. iii. Const. de fid. Cathol. c. 3. (*Denzinger*).

her wisdom, the sanctity of her heroes, until this general sensitiveness had taken in enough to give a sense that she offered indeed the most promising clue to knowledge; and then the definite wish to believe would come in." [1]

VI.

To give faith a foundation in reason the external motives of credibility must be kept prominent. The internal desires to embrace Christian faith and to assent to the truths of revelation are traceable to the influence of grace which is a physical cause in the production of faith. Some modern apologists lay great stress on the internal feelings and desires, and give them prominence among the motives of credibility.[2] A motive is a moral cause, in relation to faith, and is extrinsic. The internal movements of the mind, will and heart, are not mere moral causes in the production of faith.

It is doubtful, indeed, whether the new method is practical in scientific apologetics, even when considered within the limited sphere to which it must confine itself. Without ignoring the necessity, on the part of the subject, of certain feelings and desires, we consider it weak, if not dangerous, to give them prominence as motives of belief in scientific apologetics. The danger

[1] Ward, *Witnesses to the Unseen*, p. 308.

[2] Laberthonnière, *Essais de philosophie religieuse*. Denis, *Esequisse d'une Apologie philosophique*. Blondel, *Histoire et Dogme*.

increases if the external motives are kept in the background, or, what is worse, if they are completely ignored. Psychological Voluntarism and credulity may lead anywhere. If they are leading to orthodox faith, then we should presume that they have been preceded by an act of the reason or understanding, according to the axiom *ignoti nulla cupido*. The Vatican Council tells us that "right reason demonstrates the foundations of faith." [1] We fail to see, therefore, the necessity of introducing an antinomy between reason and will; [2] and we submit that it is easier to correct a person's metaphysics than to make him a believer, if he is still a sceptic. The seeming impossibility of giving the new method a scientific basis is thus alluded to by Father De Groot: "Credulity (*credulitas*) embraces also the appetitive faculties whose dynamism in various individuals and times, nay, even in one and the same individual, can be so varied and inconstant that the universality and necessity of science is very much at the mercy of persons and contingencies." [3]

The Vatican Council teaches: "If any person say that Divine revelation cannot become credible by external signs, and that by internal experience alone or by private inspiration men are moved to faith, let him

[1] Const. Dogm. Dei Filius c. iv.
[2] Cf. Schell, *Religion und Offenbarung*, ap. De Groot, p. 11.
[3] De Groot, O.P., *Sum. Apologet.* Q. I. art. iii. p. 19.

be anathema." [1] It is clear from the words of this Canon that the internal feelings and desires are not to receive undue prominence, as guides to faith, and that it is heretical to assert that miracles and prophecy do not provide us with a reasonable basis for our faith. If these or the other signs which lead to Catholic faith are ineffective, the result is traceable to some defect in the person who is unwilling to believe, and not to the objective signs; for the rejection of these signs is, we presume, a human act originating in the understanding as well as in the will; "for the good as perceived by the understanding is the object of the will and moves it as its end." [2]

If, on the other hand, a person wish to believe, and this wish be enlightened, it must find its objective in external facts. The motions of the will and of the feelings are part of a concrete whole. If they are isolated, they at once receive undue prominence, may not be enlightened, and are not, at least for scientific purposes, of any value. From the teaching of the Church, especially in her condemnations of the Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian heretics, we learn that the smallest leaning towards faith must come from grace. The order of grace is as the order of nature, so that every supernatural act of the will necessarily requires a corresponding and illuminating grace in the intellectual faculty.

[1] Can. 3. de Fid. Cathol. (*Denzinger*).
[2] *Sum. Theol.* P. 1. Q. LXXXII. art. 4.

It is quite permissible to suggest, then, from the point of view of the apologist, that if a person enter the Catholic Church from motives based on mere feelings, whether æsthetic or religious, and without due recognition from an intellectual standpoint of the claims of the Church, *such a person can hardly be said to have built on a foundation strong enough to inspire one with hopes of his perseverance.* While one must admit that the certitude which gives assurance to the claims of faith is subjective, yet every element in it has its objective counterpart. If it is moral certitude leading to faith, its objective can be found in the motives of credibility; if the certitude is of faith, and so from grace, it cannot legally possess more than the truths of faith and the authority of God warrant it.

If apologetics, then, are to be scientific they cannot attach much value to any subjective state of mind, even though it is labelled "certitude," without examining it in the light of objective facts. To act otherwise is to borrow from Protestant apologetics. Truth never fears the light, and Luther, because he feared it, loved, like the Gnostics and Eunomeans of old, subjectivism. He tried to find his way out through an Invisible Church. Kant applied subjective idealism to religion. Fichte, Schelling, and Hegel developed it to Pantheism. With Schleiermacher, Münster and De Wette, a subjective consciousness, sentiment, or enthusiasm, is the essence of

religion. Newman, in attempting an apology for the Protestant rule of faith, wrote the following words when a Protestant : " Probably the popular feeling of the sixteenth century saw the Bible to be the Word of God, so as nothing else is His Word, by the power of a strong sense, by a sort of moral instinct, or by a happy augury." [1] Many Protestants seem to be certain that the Bible is a sufficient rule of faith, yet others are certain that it is not. How can the certainly erroneous mental state of one of the opposing parties be rectified unless by an appeal to facts?

Newman, when a Catholic, made use of the words quoted from him above in order to point out the danger of accepting as a guide to faith any subjective feeling or instinct. He thus wrote —referring to the assumption that the Bible is an all-sufficient rule of faith—" I considered the assumption an act of the illative sense; I should now add, the illative sense, acting on mistaken elements of thought." [2]

The absence of " a will to believe," the absence of a feeling or desire or instinct towards Catholic faith, is an index of a moral defect—at least a material one—in the subject. Morality must be judged by an objective standard, if it is to be judged scientifically. The theologian has to deal with objective criteria, and not with mere

[1] *Prophetical Office of the Church*, p. 339, ed. 1837.
[2] *Grammar of Assent*, pp. 380, 381.

possible contingencies. He is an apologist for faith and the Visible Church, and his duty is to prove that all who fail to embrace these fall short of an objective obligation.

When John the Baptist appeared as the Precursor of Christ, he said to the messengers sent to him : " There hath stood One in the midst of you whom you know not." [1] It was necessary for them to know Christ in order to be saved, and John, to prepare them, said : " Do penance." [2] This is the proper remedy on the subjective side. On the objective side the Church is the guide, the judge, and the Proximate Rule of the truths of faith. We accept her as such because of the reasonableness of her claims. In like manner we accept revelation from motives based on miracles, prophecy, the sanctity of the Apostles or Prophets, all of which are sufficiently evident to produce at least moral certitude of the fact of revelation. The objective light, in every department, is all-important, and we must depend on it, if our assent to faith or to scientific truth is to be reasonable. It gives prominence to the cognitive and illuminative side of our being, and therefore to the reason. If this be ignored an assent to faith may prove indefensible, not for want of objective evidence, but from ignorance of it.

[1] John i. 26.

[2] Matt. iii. 2.

VII.

Rationalists as well as Fideists and Traditionalists have failed to give reason its proper place in its relation to religion and faith. Rationalism, although it claims to give unlimited freedom to the mind, does quite the contrary. This may seem paradoxical, but it is nevertheless true: It excludes the supernatural, and even its possibility, from religion. It is impossible to do this without shutting certain avenues of thought against reason, and refusing her an entrance where she has a right to enter. "Whatever arguments are proposed contrary to the documents of faith," writes the Angelic Doctor, ". . . have not the force of demonstration, but are either probable or sophistic reasoning." [1] Rationalism, whether Biblical, Philosophical, or Theological, fails to convince from the very fact that it is built on a non-rational basis.

Philosophic Rationalism not merely excludes the existence of revealed truth; it denies even the possibility of revelation. According to the advocates of this system, reason itself is all-sufficient, and should be recognized as something entirely independent of revelation. But, in the ordinary details of daily life, do we not often, and necessarily, seek the advice and aid of our companions? Is it reasonable, therefore, to deny our indebtedness to God and our

[1] *Cont. Gent.* Lib. i. c. vii.

dependence on Him, in things pertaining, not so much to the present life, as to the unknowable beyond the grave? When St. Peter humbled himself when face to face with a Mystery, and acknowledged the limitations of his own mind, he had more reason and wisdom on his side than those who refused, on the same occasion, to give a hearing to Christ. They unreasonably refused to admit the possibility of any truth of which their own minds were not the standard and measure.[1]

Philosophic Rationalism excludes miracles, and even the possibility of supernatural intervention in regard to nature's laws. We may instance one or two objections to show the weakness of its method from a scientific standpoint. Hume's argument contains a well-known fallacy. According to Hume, the experience of all the men who have never seen a miracle should nullify the experience of the person who professes to have seen one. One might as logically argue that the experiences of those who have never been to the North Pole—and which do not therefore include a polar experience—should nullify the polar experience of the only person who has ever been there. Hume would deny a hearing to the person who produces his credentials of a miracle on the simple plea that others have no credentials to produce regarding a similar experience. Cardinal Newman thus refers to this

[1] John vi. 61-69.

method of argument: "They (the unbelievers) are saying," he writes, "what has happened 999 times one way cannot possibly happen on the 1000th time another way, because what has happened 999 times one way is likely to happen in the same way on the 1000th. But unlikely things do happen sometimes. If, however, they mean that the existing order of nature constitutes a physical necessity, and that a law is an unalterable fact, this is to assume the very point in debate, and is much more than asserting its antecedent probability." [1] It is the sceptic, then, and not the believer who is dogmatic, since the latter pleads antecedent probability for the possibility of a departure in particular instances from nature's law, while the sceptic maintains the absolute determinism of nature's laws; but *Qui respicunt ad pauca de facili pronunciant.*

Huxley was forced to admit the weakness of Hume's logic; but, in treating of miracles, his own logic was no less defective than Hume's. "Science," he writes, "in its analysis of natural causes offers no explanation of a miracle, and so there are no miracles." The theological and metaphysical sciences do offer an explanation of the miraculous. But Huxley, who evidently refers to physical science, presumes that miracles are to be explained as if they are reducible to mere natural causes. Such an assertion destroys the

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, pp. 382, 383.

very notion of the miraculous, which supposes the intervention of a supernatural agent who suspends, or impedes, or, perhaps, elevates to a higher order of activity the secondary cause, thus constituting a departure from recognized physical law.

Philosophic Rationalism does not, in theory, exclude religion, or even Christianity, on its ethical side, provided we look upon it as the normal resultant of a previous evolutionary process. Mr. Lecky thus refers to it: "Its central conception is the elevation of conscience into a position of inferior authority as the religious organ. . . . It regards Christianity as designed to preside over the moral development of mankind as a conception which was to become more and more sublimated and spiritualized as the human mind passed into new phases and was able to bear the splendour of a more unclouded light. . . . Religion it believes to be no exception to the general law of progress, but rather the highest form of its manifestation. . . . It [Rationalism] clusters round a series of essentially Christian conceptions—equality, fraternity, the suppression of war, the elevation of the poor, the love of truth, and the diffusion of liberty. It revolves around the idea of Christianity, and represents its spirit without its dogmatic system and its supernatural narratives." [1]

[1] *History of the Rise and Influence of Rationalism in Europe*, p. 167, London, 1910.

We may consider religion of any kind, founded on such rationalistic principles, to be practically unworkable. Some would even say that Philosophic Rationalism and religion are mutually exclusive; that religion is inseparable from belief; and that no form of belief is capable of functioning as a religion in the evolution of society which does not provide an ultra-rational sanction for social conduct in the individual. In other words: "A rational religion is a scientific impossibility, representing, from the nature of the case, an inherent contradiction in terms." [1]

Revelation alone can supply us with a secure standard for our beliefs; and man is not too anthropomorphic—even though Goethe thought otherwise—to borrow from revelation. The religion of Matthew Arnold, "springing out of an experience of the power, the grandeur, the necessity, of righteousness," [2] is of little avail to the "man in the street," who has no time to go into ecstasies over the beauty of righteousness. Yet Philosophic Rationalism not only fails to give us a religion; it fails also to give us rules of conduct. "If we asked lessons of conduct," from Darwinism, writes Ferdinand Brunetière, "the one it would give us would be abominable." [3]

Biblical Rationalists limit their speculations to the Scriptures, and aim chiefly at undermining

[1] Ben. Kidd ap. Tanquerey, *Theol. Dog.* vol. i. append. p. 4.
[2] *Literature and Dogma*, p. 81; Nelson ed.
[3] *Revue des Deux Mondes*, Jan. 1, 1895.

the authenticity and inspiration of the Sacred Books. The extreme school of higher criticism has brought this aspect of Rationalism into prominence. Certain German critics haveinitiated and popularized Biblical Rationalism. Amongst the earlier exponents of it were Lessing and Reimar. These critics were strongly adverse to Divine revelation. Later on Eichhorn claimed that the Scriptures are allegories, while at the same time he attempted to explain away the miracles of the Old Testament by attributing them to natural causes. In the same way Paulus tried to explain away the miracles of the New Testament. De Wette considered the Old Testament a myth, and Strauss held similar views concerning the Gospels. Baur, the founder of the Tübingen School, applied the principles of Hegelian philosophy to the interpretation of Sacred Scripture, and attempted to show that the Christian religion, as expounded in the later documents of Scripture, is the result of a synthesis arising out of the extreme Christianity of St. Paul and the moderate and Judaizing doctrine of St. Peter. Amongst other Biblical critics of an extreme type may be mentioned Wellhausen, Ritchl, Harnack, Sabatier and Loisy. The latter, in opposing Harnack—who contended that the Church in her dogmatic teaching has corrupted the pure religion of Christ—yielded up the very fundamental truths necessary for a defence of the Catholic claims, and even of Christianity. Loisy, in holding that systematized religion

and the sacramental system are a natural outcome of the evolution of Christianity, excluded Christ from the work. According to Loisy, the Church and the Sacraments, though in harmony with the Christian idea, are not immediately and literally of Divine origin; they are the outcome of a spirit which necessarily claims symbolism and authority.[1]

Theological Rationalism does not exclude Divine revelation on its objective side, but, since it lowers it to the level of human reason, it may be said, practically, to exclude it. The system, though semi-Rationalistic in theory, is in practice pure Rationalism. Laelius Socinus advocated the interpretation of Sacred Scripture in a manner which seemed to him best suited to the laws of reason. He tried to lower the Mysteries of Faith to suit the capabilities of the human mind. The Unitarians and many Liberal Protestants, including many within the Anglican Communion—because of their liberal views in interpreting the Mysteries and truths of faith—are Semi-Rationalists.[2]

Rationalism, in its varying phases, is traceable to one source. There is no *via media* between the principles of Rationalism and Infallible Authority when there is question of the supernatural. Disobedience to authority leads to the parting

[1] *L'Évangile et L'Église*, pp. 111, 164, et seq.; *Autour d'un petit livre*, pp. 223, et seq.

[2] Cf. Tanquerey. *De Vera Religione* pp. 54-56.

of the ways. Since the sixteenth century Rationalism more than ever pretends to shield itself behind the ægis of Christianity. But in whatever form it appears no person who studies the science and psychology of religion can be ignorant of the source and spring of its existence —*Ex pede Herculem.*

From its initial stages, where, as Protestantism, it breaks with authority, to its most extreme form, where it ignores and ridicules the supernatural, Rationalism rejects the credentials of orthodox Christianity, though they appeal to reason. What is stranger still, it presumes to pass judgment on revealed truth, though the latter exceeds the limits of reason. The orthodox believer or the Catholic proceeds on diametrically opposite lines. He examines the documents of faith that he may note their value and act accordingly. He knows that life is impossible without religion, and religion without belief; that belief implies authority, and that authority in religion should be the very best. Antecedently, he wishes this to be so; he examines the facts and his reason is satisfied that it is so. He accepts the supernatural on the authority of God, and bows his reason in homage to truth which, he knows, cannot be measured by human thought. He is aware, that religion must of its nature —since it implies belief and authority—rest on truths the evidences of which are not intrinsic. Catholicism, then, implies the real apotheosis of

reason, though the contrary is asserted by those who refuse to give reason her rights.

St. Thomas, after summing up some of the advantages which accrue from Divine faith—as for example that it teaches that God is above creation, and that in Himself He is above human knowledge—further adds: "There is another advantage from it, namely, the repression of presumption which is the mother of error. There are some who are so filled with presumption regarding their natural abilities, that they deem themselves capable of measuring the Divine Nature, thinking, forsooth, that everything is true which is intelligible to them, and false which they cannot understand. In order, therefore, that the human mind may be free from presumption, and may approach in a less inflated attitude to make inquiries regarding truth, it was necessary that certain things be proposed to men on Divine authority which entirely exceed human understanding." [1]

Fideists and Traditionalists tried to undervalue the worth of human reason also, but in a way entirely different from that of the Rationalists. Without rejecting the documents and *preambula* of faith, they refused to recognize the value of reason in accepting them. Traditionalism and Fideism are based on an over-rated intellectual dependence of the individual on society, whether

[1] *Cont. Gent.* Lib. i. c. v.

domestic, civil, or religious. Extreme Traditionalists, such as De Bonald, would make this dependence universal, so that if men were not aided by a tradition depending on primal revelation, intellectual knowledge of any kind would be an impossibility. Joachim Ventura and Bonnetty advocated a less extreme form of Traditionalism, and limited the dependence of the human mind on tradition to moral and religious convictions. It is evident that, on either assumption, revelation becomes a necessary factor on the mere hypothesis of creation.

The ultra-dependence of the human mind on beliefs or traditions in its relation to the things of creation, would not only impair the intrinsic value of our mental acts of apprehension, judgment, and reasoning, but it would exclude the possibility of securing for faith itself a foundation in reason. The truth must be found in the golden mean. The Vatican Council, following the doctrine of St. Paul, teaches that God, the Beginning and End of all things, can be known by the natural light of human reason; for the invisible things of Him, from the creation of the world, are clearly seen, being understood by the things that are made.[1]

In this world two things are sufficient for at least some knowledge of God, the objective *media* of knowledge or the things of creation,

[1] Cf. Rom. i. 20.

and the subjective element or the natural light of reason. "It must be said, therefore," writes the Angelic Doctor, "that in regard to the acquisition of knowledge, there are within us certain germs . . . the primary conceptions of the understanding, which are known immediately by the light of the *intellectus agens*, through species abstracted from sensible things, whether these are complex, such as first principles, or simple, as is the notion of *being*. From these primary universal concepts all other principles follow." [1] By the natural light of reason man can acquire a knowledge of God, of His Unity and Simplicity, also of the moral need of revelation, and even of the fact of revelation. Reason can establish claims for God's Omniscience, for His Holiness and Veracity, and as a consequence, for the reasonableness of faith based on the Infallible Authority of God. By reason too, the claims of the Church, as the guardian of truth, come to be recognized; in fact the *a priori* recognition of an infallible authority, such as the Church claims to be, can be the only possible way to a rational acceptance of revelation, especially in its integrity. The Catholic believes all the truths of revelation. His faith is one, and this unity of faith arises from the reasonable mode of procedure which he adopts. The Catholic method, too, is in harmony with the express teaching of Christ.

[1] Quaest. Disp. de Veritate Q. XI., art. 1.

VIII.

Between faith and reason there can be no contradiction, as God is the Author both of the natural truths which fall within the scope of reason, and of the supernatural truths of faith. "The knowledge of first principles," writes St. Thomas, "is given to us by God, since He is the Author of our nature. These principles are also contained in the Divine Wisdom. Whatever, therefore, is contrary to these principles is contrary to the Divine Wisdom, and so cannot be from God. Those truths, therefore, which are from Divine revelation, and are held by faith, cannot be opposed to natural knowledge." [1]

Opposition may, at times, seem to exist between the truths of reason and of faith, or between science and supernatural revelation. The opposition is, however, only apparent, and may arise from the limitations of theologians, or the errors of scientists. There can be no real difference of opinion, writes Leo XIII., between the theologian and the physicist, if each confine himself to the limits of his own science, taking care, as St. Augustine says, not to rashly affirm as a fact what is yet uncertain.[2] The Catholic Church has never taught any truth which can be proved to be contrary to the deductions or findings of true science. In fact,

[1] *Cont. Gent.* Lib. 1. c. vii.
[2] Encycl. *Providentissimus Deus*, 18 Nov., 1893.

she considers it wrong to attempt to separate science and religion, and she condemns those who advocate their separation.[1]

Not only are Catholic faith and science not in opposition; but, on the contrary, they aid each other. Reason gives a foundation to faith, with the result that faith is not a blind assent to truths absolutely unknowable. It provides for the Christian believer extrinsic evidence of the truth in which he believes; for it is unreasonable to assent to truth without evidence of some kind. Reason gives us some knowledge even of the Mysteries of Faith. It explains the terms in which sacred truth is expressed. "We believe," says St. Augustine, "that Christ was born of a virgin who is called Mary; but what is a virgin, and what it is to be born, and what a proper name is, we do not believe, but we know."[2] The theologian throws much light on the truths of faith by analogy and illustration. The metaphysician explains the meaning of such terms as 'nature,' 'person,' 'essence,' 'union,' and 'relation.'

Again, the arguments which heretics and infidels bring forward against revealed truth can be easily solved. They are not really demonstrative arguments, but are mere assertions or sophistic arguments, which rest on false data. "On the

[1] Pius X., Encycl. *Pascendi.* Cf. Wiseman, *Lectures on Science and Revealed Religion.*

[2] St. August., *De Trin.* Lib. viii. c. 5, Migne, *P. L.*, tom. xlii.

authority of Sacred Scripture," as St. Thomas teaches, "we dispute against the heretics, and by one Article of Faith we argue against those who deny another. If, however, the adversary admits none of those things which are divinely revealed, there remains no way of proving the Articles of Faith by argument, but one can only solve the difficulties he may advance against faith; for, since faith rests on infallible truth, it is impossible to prove what is contrary to faith. It is evident, therefore, that the difficulties that are advanced against faith, are not demonstrations, but soluble arguments." [1]

The natural scientist, indeed, owes much to faith, and even the Deist admits many things concerning God which were unknown to the Pagans. The theologian has done much for philosophy, history, philology, palæontology, biology, the higher criticism, cosmology, hermeneutics, archæology and geology, and for architecture, painting and sculpture. There is no department of science or art which has not been aided in some way by theology, or which has not been at least stimulated by the queen of the sciences. When treating of the relation existing between revealed truth and science, Cardinal Newman writes: "I said that in order to have possession of truth at all, we must have the whole truth, and no one science, no two sciences, no one

[1] *Sum. Theol.* P. 1. Q. I. art. 8.

family of sciences, nay, not even all secular science, is the whole truth; that revealed truth enters to a very great extent into the province of science, philosophy, and literature, and that to put it on one side in compliment to secular science, is simply, under colour of a compliment, to do science a great damage." [1] Again he writes: "Revealed religion furnishes facts to the other sciences, which those sciences, left to themselves, would never reach; and it invalidates apparent facts, which, left to themselves, they would imagine." [2] Referring to the fine arts, painting, sculpture, architecture, and music, he further adds: "These high ministers of the beautiful and noble, are, it is plain, special attendants and handmaids of religion; but it is equally plain that they are apt to forget their place, and, unless restrained with a firm hand, instead of being servants, will aim at becoming principals." [3]

[1] *Idea of a University*, p. 72. [2] Ibid. p. 73. [3] Ibid. p. 78.

CHAPTER III.

Faith and Will.

I.

He who assents to a truth of faith elicits an act which is under the control of free-will and Divine grace. Moreover, the assent is directed by the interior light of faith and participates in the inerrancy of the formal object or motive of faith which is the infallible authority of God. The assent in an act of faith differs, therefore, from that which is given to a truth of science. The assent to a scientific truth is not a meritorious act, since the will in such an act cannot control the assent. The Angelic Doctor, therefore, writes: "Scientific assent is not subject to free-will, because the scientist is compelled to assent by the force of demonstration and consequently a scientific assent is not a meritorious act." [1]

The application of the mind to a scientific truth, or the consideration of such a truth, is, however, subject to the will, and can, if directed by charity, be meritorious. St. Thomas writes: "The actual consideration of the thing known is governed by free-will, since it is in a person's power to consider or to refuse to consider it.

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. II. art. 9 ad 2.

The consideration of the thing known can, therefore, be meritorious if it is directed to a charitable purpose, such as the honour of God or the good of the neighbour." [1]

In an opinion, the act is elicited with the feeling that the contrary may be true. Hence there can be little merit in an opinion, for, the motives being more or less equally balanced, the assent is weak. Faith differs, therefore, from an opinion and from scientific assent, for, unlike both, it can be fully meritorious even in the assent. "In faith," writes St. Thomas, "both the consideration of the truth believed in, and the assent, are subject to free-will, and thus an act of faith can be meritorious in the assent to a revealed truth." [2]

The wish to believe which precedes the actual acceptance of revealed truth must be distinguished from the act of will which is elicited in the assent to faith itself. The latter follows an enlightened judgment on the truths of revelation. The former is associated with the exercise of reason in its examination of the motives of credibility.

A reasonable examination of the motives of credibility does not *per se* lessen the merit of faith. An adult is, in fact, bound to use his reason before accepting the truths of faith, since the Holy Ghost says in Ecclesiasticus: "He that is hasty to give credit is light of heart." [3] In like manner the exercise of reason on the motives of

[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Ecclus. xix. 4.

credibility, or even on the truths of faith, by a person actually possessing faith—if it is done out of love for the truths of revelation, or with the object of strengthening one's faith, or of explaining the truths of faith to others—does not lessen the merit of faith; it is rather an index of a good will and of strong faith.

On the other hand, the hesitancy displayed by some before accepting revealed truth, even when the reasons given are normally convincing, points to their unwillingness to believe; while the claims they advance for excessive proof lessen *per se* the merit of faith.

Of the undue use of reason, in relation to faith, we have an example in St. Thomas the Apostle, who was unwilling to believe in Christ's Resurrection, even when normal and convincing reasons were put before him. He said: "Except I shall see in His hands the print of the nails, and put my finger into the place of the nails, and put my hand into His side I will not believe." [1] These signs of the reality of Christ's risen body did not necessarily destroy the merit of St. Thomas's faith in the Resurrection, since the Resurrection itself is a truth the intrinsic nature of which is not evident. Yet his demand for extraordinary signs was an index of a weak will, and of a less ardent desire to believe. Our Lord rebuked him therefore, and added: "Blessed are they that have not seen, and have believed." [2]

[1] John xx. 25. [2] Ibid. 29.

We have an example of the proper use of reason, accompanied by a love of faith, in the case of the Samaritans. The Samaritan inhabitants of Sichem not only accepted the motives of belief presented to them by the woman of Samaria, whose testimony they connected with Christ's claims to Messiahship, but they also brought their reason and judgment to bear on the motives presented by Christ Himself, for they said to the woman: "We now believe, not for thy saying, for we ourselves have heard Him, and know that this is indeed the Saviour of the world." [1] The Samaritans' examination of the motives presented by Christ in person did not arise from any doubt in their minds regarding His Divinity. It was rather the result of a good-will and a desire to confirm and strengthen their faith.

II.

In the actual assent to the truths of faith the act of will must be supernatural and elicited from a love of Christian faith. A person may accept a revealed truth and yet be wanting in the good-will necessary for Divine faith. This is so in the formal heretic who accepts one truth and who, from prejudice or some other unworthy motive, refuses to accept another. Such a person's faith is merely human. Again, if a revealed truth

[1] John iv. 42.

is accepted on account of the signs or motives of credibility which may be sufficiently strong to remove the possibility of reasonable doubt, while at the same time the truth is not accepted with a good will, the assent in such a case is not supernatural and meritorious. When intelligence is of a high order, and the person possessing it can so connect the signs or motives of credibility with a truth of faith as to elicit an assent to revealed truth, such an act is not an act of supernatural faith, and may possibly have been in the Pharisees when they saw the miracles of Our Lord. Natural faith of this kind is attributed to the devils when it is said of them : "The devils believe and tremble." [2] St. Thomas teaches that "the intellect of a person who believes assents to a truth of faith, not on account of seeing it in itself, nor by resolving it to its first principles, but because the act is under the control of the will which moves the intellect. The motion of the will may, however, contribute to the assent of the intellect in two ways, either because of the relation of the will to the good, so that the act is praiseworthy, or because the intellect is convinced that the thing is true, although (intrinsic) evidence of it is wanting. . . . In the followers of Christ, faith exists in the first manner, and is praiseworthy. As such, it does not exist in the demons. In the second manner, it exists in the devils, since there are signs

[2] James ii. 19.

by which they can perceive that the doctrine of the Church is from God, although they do not see in themselves the truths which the Church teaches." [1] Faith of such a kind is evidently not meritorious, and can exist even without a good-will, as it actually does in the devils. Its presence in the demons does not diminish their malice.[2] But the faith of a Catholic, even when sanctifying grace and charity are wanting, is the product of a good-will.

The will, in an act of faith, consents to what is supernaturally good for the intellect, or moves the intellect to assent to it, even though the will remain indisposed in reference to its own object or to what is formally good for itself. In this way the will can adhere to God as the First Truth, even though it does not adhere to Him as the Last End. "Faith," says the Angelic Doctor, "even though it is without its form (charity), inclines a person to believe, because of a certain tendency towards the good." But the devils "are forced to believe from the light of their natural intelligence." [3] It follows, then, that the intellect in Christian faith is not moved by the motives of credibility alone, nor in such a way that the assent is similar to that which is given to the truths of science.[4] Neither is the will merely passive in an act of faith.[5]

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. V. art. 11. [2] Ibid. ad 3. [3] Ibid. ad 2.
[4] Holcot in I. Q. I. art. 1; Picus Mirand. in Apolog. Q. 8.
[5] Scotus, 3 dist. 25, Q. 1, 2.

In Sacred Scripture want of faith is frequently attributed to a defective will. "With the heart," says St. Paul, "we believe unto justice." [1] Here the Apostle identifies the heart with a good-will, as is frequently done in Sacred Scripture. The infidelity of the Jews was attributed by Our Lord to the hardness of their hearts and the obstinacy of their wills. He blamed the two disciples on the way to Emmaus, because of their defective wills: "Oh, foolish and slow of heart," He said, "to believe in all things which the prophets have spoken." [2] And in the Acts of the Apostles we read of a certain woman named Lydia, a seller of purple, of the city of Thyatira, one who worshipped God, who did hear, and "whose heart the Lord opened to attend to those things which were said by Paul." [3]

The same truth is deduced from the teaching of the Second Council of Orange,[4] and also from the Council of Trent, from which we learn that "those who believe that the things are true, which were divinely revealed and promised, are freely moved towards God." [5] Thus the Church confirms the words of St. Augustine, who writes: "A person can enter a church unwillingly, he can unwillingly approach to the Altar and take the Blessed Sacrament, but he cannot believe unless he is willing." [6]

We have already seen, from the teaching of

[1] Rom. x. 10. [2] Luke, xxiv. 25. [3] Acts xvi. 14.
[4] Cans. 5, 6. [5] Sess. vi. c. 6. [6] Tract. xvi. in Joan.

St. Thomas, that an act of faith is meritorious, not only in its use, but also in the specification of the act. Merit is, however, impossible, unless in a free act. The assent, therefore, of the intellect, in faith, is under the control of the will, and is, in consequence, free, even in the specification of the act. The object of faith is obscure, and cannot alone determine or move the intellect to assent to it. St. Thomas points out that faith differs in this respect from the assent in scientific knowledge, which is not free in its specification, and is not as such a meritorious act.

It is not enough, then, if the will remain indifferent in the assent to faith, even though it does not dissent from the act; for the object is not evident to the believer, either immediately, as in the case of first principles, or mediately, as in a scientific conclusion. The object alone cannot determine the intellect to assent to supernatural truth.[1] The positive motion of the will under the influence of grace is necessary, not indeed to make the object evident, but to move the intellect to the assent, and to give it a certain complacency in its object, an effect of the will which is peculiar to faith.[2]

This motion of the will in an act of faith is not due to the influence of a virtue, from which the act is elicited. The act is an effect of a mere transient and actual grace. It is not perfect in

[1] Gonet, O.P., loc. cit. disp. vi. art. 1.
[2] Ibid. ad 3.

the sense that an act of any virtue is perfect. It is a means to an end. If it were an act of some virtue it should be independent or complete in itself, and not merely a means to an end. An act of virtue is perfect, and, being ultimate, is referred directly to its object; whereas, in the words of St. Thomas: "The motion of the will, in faith, is dispositive." [1] It cannot, therefore, be an act of a virtue, for such an act is not dispositive, since a virtue itself is *dispositio optimi ad perfectum.*

Even though the will, when one elicits an act of faith, is operative, yet no inconvenience arises from the absence of a virtue in the appetite. A person receives in the will actual grace each time he elicits an act of faith. When St. Thomas, therefore, teaches that "there should be a habit in the will, as well as in the intellect, if the act of faith is to be perfect," [2] he is referring to an act of faith which is perfected by charity.[3] If a habit, distinct from charity, and as a preparation for faith, or for an act of faith, exist in the will, it could not be a theological virtue, for a theological virtue has God directly and immediately for its object. Neither could it be an infused moral virtue. An infused moral virtue cannot exist without charity, and the supernatural virtue of prudence.[4] Yet the motion

[1] Q. XIV. de Veritate, art. 2 ad 10.
[2] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. IV. art. 2.
[3] Cf. Cajetan, O.P., supra idem.
[4] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LXV. art. 4 ad 1.

of the will, in an act of faith, may exist without charity. It cannot, in consequence, come from an infused habit or moral virtue; and since it is not an act of a theological virtue,[1] the reasonable deduction is, that the act of will in an assent to faith is not elicited from any supernatural virtue.

As an act of faith is caused not merely by the intellect but also by the will, the higher faculties of the soul are frequently called the efficient or the *subjective* causes of faith. These, in their relation to faith, differ from the objective causes which include the motive of faith.

An act of faith, although caused by the will, is not elicited by that faculty, but by the intellect. This is clear from certain texts of Scripture in which the act of faith is referred to as an intellectual act.[2] The Angelic Doctor thus writes: "An act of faith is immediately an act of the intellect, since the object of this act is truth, which belongs properly to the intellect."[3] In those who already possess the virtue of faith, that virtue concurs in eliciting the act. Actual grace is, however, always required to illuminate the intellect in eliciting an act of faith. Those who are without the virtue of faith receive a special and transient grace which gives to the act an efficacy similar to that produced by the

[1] Gonet, O.P., loc. cit. disp. vi. art. ii.
[2] 1 Cor. xiii. 12; 2 Cor. x. 5.
[3] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. IV. art. 2.

virtue of faith itself, and this peculiar grace is necessary, for, in the first act of faith, the virtue of faith is not the principle of that act, but is rather its result. The act is, however, under the command of the will, which is aided by a grace peculiar to that faculty, and which is inspiratory, and not illuminative. That both these graces are given is a doctrine of Catholic faith. The Vatican Council thus teaches: "No person can assent to the Gospel teaching, . . . with a view to attain salvation, without the illumination and inspiration of the Holy Spirit." [1] The same truth is implied in Sacred Scripture: "No man can come to Me," says Christ, "except the Father Who hath sent Me draw him." [2] And to the Ephesians St. Paul writes: "For by grace you are saved through faith, and that not of yourselves, for it is the gift of God." [3] The intellect and will then are so disposed by God, that these faculties receive each a grace peculiar to itself, in order to dispose the soul to receive the gift of faith, or to elicit an act of faith.

III.

The gift of faith supposes acts of humility, reverence, and obedience, in those to whom it is given, for only those who have the requisite

[1] Decret. de fid. Sess. iii. cap. 3. [2] John vi. 44.
[3] Ephes. ii. 8.

dispositions receive this gift. But these dispositions are themselves the effects of actual grace. This grace is often given in response to prayer. Our Lord said: "Ask and it shall be given you; seek and you shall find; knock and it shall be opened to you." [1] Those who are without faith should, therefore, pray to receive from God the grace without which it is impossible to make an act of faith. Cardinal Newman, in his *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, uses the following remarkable words: "Faith is the gift of God, and not a mere act of our own which we are free to exert when we will. It is quite distinct from an exercise of reason, though it follows upon it. I may feel the force of the argument for the divine origin of the Church; I may see that I ought to believe; and yet I may be unable to believe. . . . Faith is not a mere conviction or reason; it is a firm assent; it is a clear certainty, greater than any other certainty; and this is wrought in the mind by the grace of God and by it alone. As then men may be convinced, and not act according to their conviction, so may they be convinced, and not believe according to their conviction. . . . In a word, the arguments for religion do not compel anyone to believe, just as arguments for good conduct do not compel anyone to obey. Obedience is the consequence of willing to obey, and faith is the consequence of willing to believe. We

[1] Matt. vii. 7.

may see what is right, whether in matters of faith or obedience, of ourselves, but we cannot will what is right without the grace of God." [1]

We must not suppose, however, that the wish to believe, which is the effect of an actual grace peculiar to the will, is elicited without the illuminating influence of grace in the practical intellect. The will is distinct from the practical reason, yet when the latter is convinced the will to believe, and faith, follow. Newman, therefore, when speaking of conviction without faith, refers to conviction of the speculative, inoperative, and inefficacious intellect. The practical and speculative reason must be considered apart, if we are to avoid the confusion of thought and the erroneous views of those who think that the will to believe is alone the important thing in faith. This would imply an undue elevation of the appetitive side of our nature, as we see in the Kantists and certain modern Apologists whose views are tinged with Kantian metaphysics. "Since," writes Gonet, "for every act on the part of the will, a previous act on the part of the intellect is necessary, an act of the intellect is required to immediately regulate the pious motion or affection of the will. Such an act is the practical judgment by which the suitability and integrity of belief is represented to the will, and by which it is influenced in the

[1] *Discourses to Mixed Congregations*, xi., p. 224. ed. 1886.

wish to believe. Such a practical judgment is in substance supernatural." [1]

As the act of will in the actual assent to faith is preceded by an illuminating grace in the intellect, so the will to believe follows on a reasonable attitude of mind towards the motives of credibility and on a mental recognition of the importance of faith. Its existence depends on a previous judgment, and its value is in proportion to the efficiency of that judgment; and since such a judgment must have an objective standard, the wish to believe must also be regulated by an objective standard. The impelling or motive cause, therefore, leading to faith, or the objective motives of credibility, are indispensable, and consequently the apologetic which dispenses with miracles, prophecy, or the other signs of God's supernatural revelation is unsound.

A well-ordered religious belief is based on objective facts, and not on mere subjective feelings or emotions. The attitude of mind adopted by the person in search of religious truth should not be credulous, for such an attitude may lead as readily to superstition as to truth. Neither should it be what is known as "the law-court attitude of mind" which supposes that the wish to believe, or a love of the truth, or a tendency towards truth is pre-

[1] Gonet, O.P., Clyp. Theol. loc. cit. disp. vi. art. 1.

judicial to an honest inquiry in matters of faith. A disinterested state of mind and heart may serve to overthrow a false religion, but it can also lead to Agnosticism. The proper attitude for those who seek for Divine truth, is the religious attitude, which is coupled with a wish to believe, and a longing to find in life the recognition of one's hopes for eternity, as is experienced by those who, after years, perhaps, of patient search, enter at last the Catholic Church.

Whatever the immediate object of inquiry may be in this connexion, the wish for the object sought for is indispensable. But in every case the spring and origin of religious inquiry should be objective, and also supernatural, either as a cause, or as an effect, as may be seen in the case of those who are impressed either by the sanctity of the Church, or by the supernatural influence of the Church upon the world.

A good will, as we have seen, is necessary in the person who is seeking for faith. The will is necessary in the act of faith itself. The will is also connected with faith through charity. Charity is a virtue of the will, and under its influence an act of faith is elicited, not merely as it is specified by the First Truth, but also as it is directed to the Final Cause of all. In this way charity makes an act of faith meritorious, for faith receives from charity a new form which influences faith, not indeed by moving it to its

own proper object, but by giving it a further though accidental specification in directing it to a new object, or to God the Supreme Good. The influence of charity, therefore, on faith cannot be overlooked in dealing with the will in its relation to faith, nor can the influence of faith on hope be overlooked, since without faith, based on the revelation of God and His promises of eternal life, hope is impossible. But hope is also a virtue of the will.

IV.

As faith is a virtue of the understanding, and as the virtues of hope and charity are in the will, the relationship which exists between the three theological virtues should correspond with the analogous but fundamental relationship which exists between the higher faculties of the soul. Referring to the mutual influence of these higher faculties on each other, St. Thomas remarks: "A thing may be said to move another in two ways: first, as an end, as when the object is said to move the agent, and in this way the intellect moves the will, for the good perceived by the intellect is the object of the will and moves it as an end. Again, a thing is said to move, as an agent, as when the thing which changes moves the thing changed, or an impelling force moves the thing impelled,

and in this way the will moves the intellect and all the powers of the soul." [1]

The influence of the will is universal in relation to the faculties subject to it, and hence the Angelic Doctor compares the will to a king "who, intending the common or general good of the whole kingdom, moves, by his imperial authority, the individual officials who have charge of the subordinate offices in the several departments of the State." [2] The will aims at the universal good of the subject; the other faculties aim at some particular good proper to themselves, as that of sight to the perception of colour, that of intellect to the perception of some particular truth." [3] There is this difference, however, between the intellect and the other faculties subordinate to the will, that whereas the latter are limited in their range to a particular object, the intellect can attain to the notion of *truth* or of *being in general.*[4] In like manner the will, besides tending to the particular good which specifies any of its determined acts, tends naturally to the *good in general.*

Because of this natural tendency of the will, it has power over the intellect to move it. "Under this aspect," writes St. Thomas, "the will is superior to the intellect and is capable of moving it." [5] The intellect, however, moves the will by providing for it an object, and so moves it in the

[1] *Sum. Theol.* P. i. Q. LXXXII. art. 4. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.
[4] Ibid. [5] Ibid. P. i. Q. LXXXII. art. 4 ad 1.

order of final causality. As such, it is superior to the will as the cause is superior to the effect, but, as it in turn is moved through the agency of the will to a determined act, it is inferior to the will.

The Angelic Doctor teaches that the intellect, considered in itself, is superior to the will; and as a cognitive act precedes every motion of the will, the intellect is not directed to its first act or to the knowledge of *being* by the will, as the will, as yet, has no object, and without an object it has no motive power. He further adds that the intellect, in that operation which is independent of the motive power of the will, is moved by God.[1] This is also the teaching of Aristotle.

As the operations of the intellect are prior to those of the will, so the virtue of faith, which is in the intellect, is, of its nature, prior to the virtues of hope and charity, which are in the will. Grace is a perfection of nature, and is, therefore, not only in harmony with human nature, but is also in harmony with the order of the human faculties; hence it is reasonable that in the beginning of the supernatural life in the soul an illuminative grace should precede the *pia motio voluntatis.*

As faith is in the intellect, and marks the beginning of the supernatural life, we must trace the beginnings of the supernatural life to

[1] Ibid. ad 3.

the intellect. The assent to faith, it is true, is not made without the motion of the will under the influence of grace, but the will cannot move unless in the wake of a cognitive act. If the act of will is supernatural, the cognitive act which precedes it must be also supernatural. The prominence which is thus given to the intellect is emphatic in Catholic teaching. On this account the Catholic knows what he professes. He is definite and not vague. He can isolate his feelings, set a value on them, and refuse to elevate the mystic side of his nature at the expense of the illuminative.

According to St. Thomas, man's natural inclinations are influenced in two ways, first, through his reason or intellect; secondly, through his will, which naturally tends to that which is good according to reason.[1] Reason and will, however, are not capable in themselves of directing man to his supernatural end, for, as St. Paul teaches in his Epistle to the Corinthians, "Eye hath not seen, nor ear heard, nor hath it entered into the heart of man to conceive what God hath prepared for those who love Him."[2] "It was necessary, therefore," writes St. Thomas, "to add something to both these faculties, in order to direct a man, supernaturally, to his Last End. In the first place, certain principles which are in-

[1] Cf. *Sum. Theol.* Q. LXII., art. 3. [2] 1 Cor. xi. 9.

telligible in the Divine Light are given to the understanding, and these are credible truths, (*concerning which there is faith*). In the second place, the will is directed in intention to something which is possible of attainment, and this belongs to hope, and (*it is also directed*) to a certain spiritual union which . . . is effected by charity."[1] Charity, which implies love and union, transforms the person possessing it, in some way, into the object loved. This union is not perfect on earth, and so the will tends towards a more intimate union which is attained in the beatific vision. This tendency of the will is not a mere supernatural desire, but is elicited from a virtue which is distinct from charity, and which gives to the will a motive power to resist the obstacles which hinder the attainment of eternal life. These obstacles are overcome by hope, which, relying on the Omnipotence of God and His promises, braces the will to perseverance, and drives away despair.

V.

As faith is in the intellect, which is a more perfect faculty than the will, it would seem to follow that faith is more perfect than charity. The latter is, however, more perfect than faith, and its superiority over that virtue is thus

[1] Ibid.

accounted for by St. Thomas: "When there is question of the mere natural operations of the faculties," writes the Angelic Doctor, "the act of intellect is more perfect than the act of will. The contrary is true when there is question of the supernatural acts of faith and charity. In the cognitive acts, the object known is received into the intellect, and is immaterialized to suit the immaterial nature of the intellect, thus verifying the axiom, that 'whatever is received by another is received according to the mode of the recipient.' Thus it happens that in natural knowledge the object known is always elevated in the act of cognition, or spiritualized to harmonize with the spiritual nature of the mind. It is not so, however, with the natural acts of the appetitive faculty or of the will, which tend to the object according to the axiom, 'the lover is in the thing loved'; hence it follows that, since a cognitive act implies the elevation of the object, while an appetitive act implies a lowering of the faculty as it tends to the external object, the act of knowledge is more perfect than the act of volition." [1]

In the supernatural acts of intellect and of will the operation of the will is elevated by its object, which is supernatural, whereas the object of the intellect is rather lowered in being adapted to the capacity of the human

[1] Cf. *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LXVI. art. 6. ad 1.

understanding; hence an act of faith, although belonging to the cognitive faculty, is less perfect than an act of charity. "In those things," remarks the Angelic Doctor, "which are above man, love is more perfect than knowledge. . . . The contrary is true with regard to those things which are beneath man." [1]

The material object of the three theological virtues is the same, viz., God. From the point of view, therefore, of the material object, one theological virtue is not greater than another. There is, however, a formal difference implied in the nearer approach to God which is given by charity than can be given by either faith or hope. "As the three theological virtues," writes the Angelic Doctor, "refer to God as their proper object, one of them cannot be said to be greater than another in the sense that it refers to a greater object; but it can indeed be greater, inasmuch as it approaches (*se habeat*) nearer to its object; and, in this way, charity is greater than the others; for the others, of their nature, suppose the object removed some distance; for faith is about the things that are not seen; hope is concerning the things that are not yet in possession; but the love of charity embraces that which is already in possession; for the thing loved is in some way in the person loving, and the lover is drawn by attraction to

[1] Ibid.

union with the object loved, as St. John says in his first Epistle, 'He that abideth in charity, abideth in God, and God in him.'" [1]

VI.

Though charity implies such a close union with God, it by no means follows that charity should take priority to faith and hope in its infusion into the soul. Charity must, of its very nature, and even when it receives the widest scope for its operations, be preceded by an act of the intellect enlightened by the grace of faith and by the Holy Ghost. An act of love psychologically presupposes an act of the cognitive faculty, according to the axiom, *nil volitum quin praecognitum.* Faith is co-extensive with charity and hope, and even the laws of psychology require that we should not advocate a blind love of God, or one which does not come from enlightened faith. To elevate the appetites without a corresponding recognition of our cognitive faculties is scientifically unintelligible. The appetite is a blind faculty, and, if it is to act rationally, it must necessarily be guided by an illuminative act of the mind.

The Schoolmen in their writings made ample provision for the appetitive side of our nature, the will, the heart, the feelings and emotions.

[1] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LXVI. art. 6.

But they never set much value on the feelings, unless when they considered them in relation to the cognitive laws which should govern them. Their method is scientifically sound, and theologically consistent and safe. The elevation of the emotional and mystical, at the expense of the illuminative, has no justification even in psychology, and we may safely say that God, in elevating man to a supernatural state, does not falsify the psychological laws established by Himself. No person, acquainted with the works of St. Thomas, can fail to recognize how fully he realized the order and due proportion of the human faculties, and how well, in his writings, he has adjusted every part to suit the whole.

Not the least prominent of the errors of the Modernists, and even of some who profess to be Catholics, is the undue elevation of the emotions and appetites to the detriment of faith. In this way the claims of revelation are compromised, and the realities of objective truth discounted. It is not permissible to assign a moral value to the facts of revelation, which may stand independent, or exclude their speculative or intellectual value. Speaking of God, however, Ed. Le Roy writes : " Dieu est personnel veut dire comportez-vous dans vos relations avec Dieu comme dans vos relations avec une personne humaine." [1] According to this writer, the only

[1] La Quinzaine 16 April, 1905.

value the existence of a personal God has for us is, that we should so live as if there were a personal God : to affirm that there is no personal God may not be wrong, though it would be immoral to regulate our actions by any standard which is not in keeping with the existence of a personal God. This is really creating a God to suit oneself, and is thoroughly Fichtian. In reading these words one is reminded of Voltaire, when he recommended Atheists, who had already lost belief in the existence of the God of their fathers, to create one suited to their changed condition and mental outlook. Thus does error teach us the need we have of faith as a guide in estimating the character of a human act in its relation to the Author of Grace.

Charity is not possible without faith and hope, though the latter virtues may exist in an imperfect way without charity. St. Thomas thus writes of the relationship existing between the theological virtues : " There exists," he remarks, " a double relationship between them, one in the order of generation, the other in the order of perfection. In the order of generation—in which matter precedes its form, and the imperfect the more perfect—and in one and the same person, faith precedes hope and charity. The appetitive faculty cannot tend to any act, either of hope or love, if the object to which it refers is not apprehended by the intellect under the

light of illuminative grace and by the aid of faith; for by faith the intellect apprehends the things for which it hopes and which it loves. . . . A person loves a thing because he recognizes it to be good for him. If a person hope to obtain good from another he proceeds to love him, and so charity is naturally preceded by faith and hope. In the order of perfection, however, charity precedes faith and hope, because faith and hope acquire their vitality and their ultimate perfection as virtues through charity." [1]

VII.

Charity, because of its pre-eminence and influence over the other virtues, has justly been recognized as the queen and mother of the virtues. Referring to the pre-eminence of charity over the other virtues, St. Thomas remarks: "Faith and hope pertain to God, because in them are acquired the knowledge of the *true* and the possession of the *good*, but charity extends to God Himself, so that it abides in Him, and does not merely bring some perfection to us from God." [2] On this account charity is not only more perfect than faith and hope, but is also much more excellent than the moral virtues. St. Thomas compares it to prudence

[1] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. LXII. art. 4.
[2] Ibid. IIa. IIae. Q. XXIII. art. 6.

which, although a moral virtue, possesses a certain pre-eminence over the other moral virtues, for prudence refers to reason in some way similar to that in which charity refers to God. "For prudence, because it belongs to reason in itself, is more excellent than the other moral virtues which pertain to reason, inasmuch as it [reason] is constituted the mean in human operations and in the passions." [1] Since God is the measure of charity, and reason of prudence, charity must far exceed in perfection even prudence itself, although prudence is the queen of the moral virtues.

St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, tells us that faith and the other virtues are grounded on charity. "That Christ may dwell by faith in your hearts," he writes, "that being rooted and founded in charity, you may be able to comprehend, with the saints, what is the length and breadth and height and depth." [2] According to St. Paul, charity embraces every side of the spiritual life, and is even its foundation and groundwork. This would seem to contradict what the Sacred Scriptures and spiritual writers teach when they make faith the foundation of the spiritual life. But the contradiction is only apparent. St. Thomas, referring to this apparent contradiction, remarks: "Charity is compared to a foundation and a root because by it all the other virtues

[1] Ibid. [2] Eph. iii. 17, 18.

are nourished and sustained. It is not (as faith is) the foundation after the manner of a material cause." [1]

Charity influences faith and the other virtues rather as a formal cause. The Angelic Doctor treats it as such, although the relationship which it bears to the theological and moral virtues is not precisely the same as that which an ordinary substantial form bears to the matter which it actuates or *informs*. "Charity," writes the Angelic Doctor, "is said to be the form of the other virtues, not indeed as the exemplar or as an essential cause, but rather effectively (effective)." [2] The Angelic Doctor explains in what the efficiency exercised by charity consists. In a moral act, he tells us, the form is identified principally with the end to which the act is directed, for as in substantial things it is the form which specifies, so in human acts the end specifies, or gives an essential character to the moral act. This is due to the fact that in moral acts the will is the agent and its object and quasi-form the end. "The form of the act, however, always follows the form of the agent." [3] "Charity," he adds, "is the end of the other virtues, because it directs all the other virtues to its own end." [4] This end is the Ultimate End of the supernatural life. In this new and spiritual

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. XXIII. art. 8 ad 2.
[2] Ibid. ad 1.
[3] Ibid. corp. art.
[4] Ibid. ad 3.

relationship, the soul receives new life in which the virtues participate. "In this way charity gives a form to the acts of all the other virtues and for this reason is it said to be the form of the virtues." [1]

VIII.

According to the teaching of the Angelic Doctor, faith and hope and certain moral habits may exist without charity, although without it they are not perfect virtues. Speaking of faith without charity, he remarks: "Faith which is not *informed* (*by charity*) is not a [perfect] virtue, for although it has the perfection due to it from the intellect, it has not the perfection which is due to it on the part of the will, just as when temperance is in the concupiscible appetite and prudence is absent from the reason, temperance is not a [perfect] virtue." [2]

St. Thomas explains why this influence on the part of the will is necessary for the perfection of faith. "Since faith," he writes, "is an act of the intellect as it assents to truth under the imperial authority of the will, a perfect act of faith requires two things: the first is, that the intellect tend infallibly to its own object, namely, to that which is true; the second is, that the will

[1] *Sum. Theol.* corp. art.
[2] Ibid. IIa. IIae. Q. IV. art. 5.

be directed infallibly to the Ultimate End on account of which it assents to what is true." [1]

Although faith without charity possesses the perfection which is due to it on the part of the intellect, or what belongs to it in its relation to truth, it has not the perfection which is due to it on the part of the will, if charity is wanting. The intellect and will are faculties which exist in the same soul; the defects of one are detrimental to the operations of the other. These defects are more noteworthy in the case of the practical intellect, which, in connexion with sin and the loss of charity, judges erroneously and participates more immediately in the defects of the will. "The soul, which is the seat of all these faculties, receives from charity," writes the Angelic Doctor, "the power of directing the will to a good end." [2]

But faith and hope are, even without charity, gifts of God, for the perfections arising from the virtue of charity are not essential to the specific nature of faith; hence as God is the cause of living faith or a faith which is *informed* by charity, so is He also the cause of non-living faith. "When one assigns the cause of anything," writes the Angelic Doctor, "he is understood to do so according as it exists in its specific nature . . . and therefore whatever is the cause of faith which is a [perfect] virtue, is also the cause of faith which is without charity." [3]

[1] Ibid. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid. Q. VI. art. 2.

The contribution of the will which makes faith perfect is considerably more than the motion required for the mere assent in an act of faith. Besides contributing to the assent the will should also correspond to its own object, which although considered materially, is identical with the primary object of faith, yet relative to the will is the Ultimate End. It is this adaptability of the will which elevates faith to the dignity of a perfect virtue, and which makes it in a special way dependent on the will. This dependence of faith on the will is not in that order of causality in which the will moves the intellect to the assent. It is rather in the order of formal causality.

The necessary dependence of faith as a perfect virtue on the will is thus emphasized by St. Thomas. "For the perfection of an act which proceeds from two active principles," writes the Angelic Doctor, "it is necessary that each of the active principles be perfect. To exercise the act of carving, it is necessary that a person know the art, and that the knife be properly disposed for carving. . . . It is necessary, therefore, that an act proceeding from two faculties should be perfected by a habit existing in each of the faculties . . . An act of faith (*credere*) is an act of the intellect as it is moved by the will to the assent, and therefore a habit is required in the will as well as in the intellect, if the act of faith is to be perfect."[1]

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. IV. art. 2.

It follows, then, that even though the understanding or the speculative intellect be turned supernaturally to the First Truth, yet if the will is turned away from the Last End faith is imperfect. It does not find a normal outlet to the will, and thence to the heart and the affections. On the contrary, if faith finds an outlet and is not impeded by a defective will, it gives supernatural life to the whole person. Thus charity springs from faith as from a root and even though it is not in the same faculty as faith, its absence impedes the practical exercise of that virtue in blossoming into good works. In this way we can understand the words quoted by St. Paul, when he says: "The just man liveth by faith." [1]

Aristotle, when treating of an analogous point, says: "The speculative intellect becomes practical when it is extended." [2] This is effected when the will harmonizes with the intellect in their varied relations to human life and activity.

IX.

The connexion between the virtue of faith and the will through charity was ignored by Luther and the Reformation theologians. With them faith received a meaning completely at variance with the traditional view of that virtue.

[1] Habac. ii. 4; Rom. i. 17; Gal. iii. 11; Heb. x. 38.
[2] In Lib. iii. de anima.

According to Luther, the human mind and heart are so corrupted by Original Sin, that man is totally incapable of good. In fact, every act of his, on account of the corruption of the source from which it springs, is sinful.[1] It seemed to Luther necessary, therefore, to transfer all the work pertaining, not merely to Redemption, but also to justification and merit, to Christ, and that so completely as to make it the duty of the Christian to trust that the ample merits of Christ in the vast work of Redemption extend to himself in particular. Men, according to this teaching, are not justified by their own meritorious acts, but by the appropriation of the merits and justification of Christ.[2]

The idea of justification advanced by the Reformers is clearly at variance with the teaching of St. Paul, who, when speaking of himself, tells us that he tried to fill up in his person that which was wanting to him in the Passion of Christ. This filling-up or applying of the merits of Christ, so as to obtain personal and individual merit, was ignored by the founders of Protestantism. The individual, they said, should not attempt such an advance on Christ's work; it would impede the confidence of the Christian that everything has been already

[1] Luth. Lib. de vit. conjug.

[2] Cf. Calvin, Lib. iii. Instit. c. xi. Cf. Canones 9 and 10 Concil. Trid. Sess. vi.

done by Christ. This trust in Christ is itself the cause or the occasion of personal justification.[1]

Luther and Calvin excluded free-will from the work of justification, and affirmed that the will is not free to do good, but that it is rather under a moral constraint to do evil. It is not difficult to see how the theory of Absolute Predestination, adopted by the Calvinists, follows from such erroneous views.[2] But it seems paradoxical that those who denied the freedom of the will should have shifted at the same time the foundation of faith from the intellect to the will. This fact alone shows the impossibility of such a faith possessing the characteristics peculiar to orthodox and Catholic belief. Faith, when rightly understood, refers to truth, and supernatural revelation; but truth and revelation appeal directly to the intellect, and not to the will. The misleading views of Luther and Calvin regarding faith, although abandoned later on by Protestant theologians, have left a permanent mark on Protestant theology, and one is forced to think, from the prominence which Protestant divines still give to the appetites in regard to truth, that to them faith seems to be something which belongs principally to the will.

[1] Calvin, Instit. Lib. iii. c. 3. Cf. Canones 13 and 14 Concil. Trid. Sess. vi.

[2] Cf. Can. 15 ibid.

The theory of justification by faith alone presupposes that the Fall of our First Parents eliminated from human nature the will to do good. One is at a loss however to know how this is so, if men are to be exhorted even to a blind trust in Christ and His merits, which, with all its defects as applied to the theory of justification, must surely imply some good, if one's salvation is depending on it. Be this as it may, "imputed justification" excludes the necessity of observing the Commandments. It covers the sins just as a beautiful garment hides the sores of an ulcered body. To effect this, not only is charity unnecessary, but it is in fact an impediment.[1] Sin is the measure of faith, and therefore, the more numerous and grievous our sins are, the greater must be our confidence and trust, so that even present or future sin may serve as an index to greater faith. Hence Luther's famous dictum—"Pecca fortiter sed fortius fide."[2]

In this way, instead of faith and repentance or sorrow for sin being associated in the work of justification, it is rather faith and sin that are associated; for the multiplication of sin requires a further extension of the robe of justification over the sinful soul. Change of heart, however, or real repentance, finds no place in Luther's theory

[1] Calv. Instit. Lib., iii. cc. 12, 13.
[2] Ep. ad Melanchton.

of justification.[1] The soul remains unchanged in its sin, yet it is enriched by receiving of the merits of Christ, just as an earthen vessel is enriched when it is filled with precious jewels, although the vessel remains the same as before.[2]

If we analyse this theology we shall find that, even theoretically, it deprives the soul of the three theological virtues, faith, hope, and charity. The orthodox notion of faith was rejected by Luther, while faith which worketh by charity he pronounced useless and even harmful. The blind confidence or assurance of justification, which he advocated, would tend to deprive the soul of the virtue of hope. Hope is destroyed by despair, and is, at least, weakened by presumption. Now, an assurance and trust or confidence which is unaccompanied by repentance or sorrow for sin is simply presumption—a sin which is contrary to Christian hope by way of excess. Hope, then, together with faith and charity, is weakened or altogether destroyed by the doctrines of Lutheran theology; that is to say, by it the whole substructure of the supernatural life of the soul is torn up.

The exclusion of charity necessarily excludes the possibility of good works. If love enters at

[1] Luth. de cap. Bab. c. de Bapt.; cf. Calv. Instit. Lib. iii. cc. 3, 4.

[2] Moehler, *Symbolism*, p. 125.

all into primitive Protestant theology it is as an effect. But one may ask how it is possible to have trust and confidence in God without charity and good works. If a person trust in God, it must be because he recognizes that God is compassionate and good, and so, worthy of his love. Trust, then, is inseparable from love, and hence it must find an exit in action. Confidence is only one phase in the history of love, and men's sins are forgiven, not merely that they may still love, but because they have already loved. "Many sins are forgiven her," said Christ of Mary Magdalen, "because she hath loved much." [1] And love, of its very nature, claims that we try to show it in our actions or in our works.

Some of the Reformers, recognizing the necessity of charity in the work of justification, tried to introduce it, not indeed as a cause, but as a condition of justification. Later on, good works were admitted by them, not indeed as necessary, but as useful for salvation. Luther's own teaching was that good works are sinful, and are even mortal sins, though he admitted that works done in faith are only venial sins.

Many well-meaning Protestants have no sympathy for the novel and absurd theory of justification advanced by the Reformers, yet, notwithstanding this, they look to them for

[1] Luke vii. 47.

guidance and consider them worthy of confidence and even admiration. Many, who are stronger in their sympathies than in their orthodoxy, try to justify them by appealing to isolated texts from St. Paul. The teaching of the saint is so clear on the necessity of charity and good works, that it is difficult to see how any fair-minded person can lend support to Lutheran teaching. St. Paul, indeed, refers to the necessity of justification without the works of the law—*χωρὶς ἔργων νόμου*.[1] In writing to the Romans, he wished to intimate to the Jews at Rome, and to all who desired to practise the Jewish rites even under the Christian Dispensation, that the Ceremonial Law was no longer necessary, and would, in fact, constitute an impediment to justification.

In every error there is some truth. But erroneous teaching, as distinct from orthodox, leads to developments even opposite and contradictory. Post-Reformation teaching became varied and contradictory according as different individuals, with different tastes and mental qualities, emphasized some one or other isolated fragment of truth or aspect of truth already shorn of the substantials necessary for true and orthodox faith. "It is almost a definition of heresy," writes Cardinal Newman, "that it fastens on some one statement as if the whole truth, to

[1] Rom. iii. 28.

the denial of all others, and as the basis of a new faith." [1]

By banishing the theological virtues from the soul the Reformers deprived it of the infused moral virtues also. Luther and Calvin ignored, even explicitly, some of the more important of these. In taking charity from the will they also took from that faculty the virtue of obedience. Furthermore, they considered the observance of the Commandments an impossibility.[2] The only saving obedience they said is that of Christ, which we may appropriate if we wish. This obedience may exist side by side with personal disobedience or with the violation of the Commandments; hence no breach of the Divine Precepts impedes justification. Luther, speaking of the sinner, says "However great his sins may be, unless he refuse to believe, nothing can damn him but unbelief alone." [3]

In the theory of justification here explained, the will is not moved to penance for sin; neither is humility necessary that the sinner may be saved. The exclusion of humility by the Reformation theologians is not so novel as the motive advanced for excluding it. "Man can never know his own littleness sufficiently to be humble" is the reason given; and this is certainly so, if man has lost the gift of free-will. But to make man

[1] *Oxford University Sermons*, Sermon xv.
[2] Luth. Com. in Ep. ad Gal.
[3] De Cap. Bab. tom. ii. fol. 264.; cf. Moehler, op. cit. p. 126, n. †

less than he is, really tends to destroy humility. Humility rests on truth, and a person is no more humble by saying that he is a mere animal and nothing more, than by saying that he is an angel. But, in their humility, the Reformers would exclude even the possibility of humility; this is surely the *reductio ad absurdum* of Reformation theology.

The angels who brought the joyful tidings of the Nativity of Our Lord announced the beginning of a reign of peace: "Peace on earth," they said, "to men of good will." They sang of a peace which follows on obedience and the possession of charity. The peace which Our Lord bequeathed to His followers was one which is attendant on, or born of, good works and the observance of the Commandments. The Lutheran theologians considered peace incompatible with the anxiety which is necessary for the observance of law. If the individual is free from the restrictions and anxieties necessary for the observance of the law, peace, they said, must follow; but surely this is not Christian peace, the peace of a good conscience. The peace which is one of the fruits of the Holy Ghost is ever associated with charity, joy, and meekness, which are themselves the fruits of a good will.

CHAPTER IV.

Faith and the Religious Sense

I.

Since faith is the foundation of the Christian life, its influence must be far-reaching and important in all the operations of the mind and heart which deal with God. The religious emotions and feelings are insecure without it, and their utility and worth depend very much on its presence. "The first truth," as St. Thomas remarks, "which is the object of faith, is the end of all our desires and operations." [1] A more correct and fuller knowledge of God comes to us from Divine revelation, while the dangers to which even natural religion are exposed, without special and supernatural aid, are alone a sufficient proof of the moral need of revelation; hence the Angelic Doctor writes: "Even regarding those truths which can be investigated by natural reason it was necessary that man be taught by Divine revelation; for truth concerning God could be acquired by few, and after a considerable time, and mixed with much error." [2]

On the supposition that man's end is super-

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. IV. art. 2 ad 3.
[2] Ibid. P. 1. Q. 1. art. 1.

natural revelation is *absolutely* necessary. "It is necessary," writes St. Thomas, "that the end be known to those who ought to direct their intention and actions to the end. Hence, in order to secure his salvation, it was necessary that man should know from revelation those truths which are beyond human reason." [1]

Supernatural religion, then, does not originate with man but with God, and though it is in harmony with man's higher nature, it is not a human work, like philosophy or science, nor is it traceable to human ingenuity or invention.[2] It is needed, moreover, to correct man's erroneous tendencies, which, if not rectified by the guiding influence of faith and Divine authority, become depraved, pervert the religious sense, and even lead to superstition and idolatry. In proof of this we have the testimony of *savants* who tell us that even Cannibalism is traceable to misguided religious sentiment, and we read that religion looms largely behind the funeral orgies and human sacrifices of the East. In Japan, not long ago, Hanji Shimaduz committed suicide, after protesting in a letter that Western vices were demoralizing his countrymen, the Japanese. In Japan the crime of suicide is in accordance with Samurai law, and is preceded by purifications and other religious observances. Of the Mexicans we read that they offered to

[1] Ibid.
[2] Encycl. Pius IX. 9 Nov., 1846.

their god a human heart, and of the Aztecs that they sacrificed human victims. "Men," says Schanz, "make the gods as cruel as themselves, and try to propitiate them with human sacrifices." [1] St. Paul expresses the same truth when he writes: "They (the Gentiles) changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man." [2] When human nature sinks so low one may say with Tacitus that "man has become the plaything of the gods."

Since a depraved religious sense presupposes corrupt notions concerning God, any corruption of the Deposit of Revelation, in which God has revealed Himself, destroys the truth of revealed religion. There is only one true religion, and it is found where the truths of revelation have been preserved intact. To falsify revelation is to falsify faith and consequently religion, for, as St. Thomas teaches: "Religion is a profession of faith, hope, and charity, by which man is brought into close relationship with God." [3]

A thorough appreciation of the affinity and higher analogy between man and his Creator is necessary in order to understand the supernatural and new relationship initiated under revelation and grace. At the same time daily experience as well as history go to show that where reve-

[1] Schanz, *Christian Apology*, English trans. vol. i. p. 71.
[2] Rom. i. 23.
[3] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. ci. art. 3 ad 1.

lation and faith do not influence men, they fail to appreciate fully and practically even the natural affinities existing between themselves and God. Our reason tells us, for instance, that the existence of finite things is possible only on the supposition of the existence of a personal God; yet many people are found who profess Pantheism, Materialism, even Atheism. Moreover it may be truly said of numbers who abandon Christianity, that not a few are cut off from the possibility of reverting even to the higher types of natural religion, as they are found among "the solid family of modern inner China, of regal Rome, of Homeric Greece and of the Egyptians of the great pyramids, and find themselves driven back to lower forms and threatened with the worst abominations of outcast and degraded races." [1]

Nevertheless, many so-called scientists leave little room in their theories for Christianity. They insist on limiting our knowledge to facts, not merely positively and in the sense that our knowledge, to be valid, must rest on facts, but also in the negative sense, for they assert that we are to admit nothing that does not fall within the sphere of sensible phenomena. On such a supposition, religion in the true, orthodox, and traditional sense disappears, and we have substituted for it the worship of Humanity, and of the Unknow-

[1] Devas, *Key to the World's Progress*, p. 58.

able, the religion of the Neo Kantists, and the philosophy of Immanence.

II.

If we turn to pre-Christian history we are presented with a sad picture of the decadence of religion, where revelation, and, we may say, continued revelation, was impeded in its healthy influence on religion. Even when it is admitted that all nations preserved at least some element of primitive revelation, the Jewish religion alone was acceptable to God. Belief in the Unity and Providence of God permeated the whole of the religious life of the Jews; and, based on these two primary and fundamental truths, their religious system presented a striking contrast to that of contemporary nations. There were indeed points of similarity between Judaism and the Paganism of Rome, Greece, and Babylon. But the points of similarity are often exaggerated by writers who ignore the vast and essential differences between Judaism and Paganism.[1] Amongst other things one may notice an absence from the Jewish religion of that obscenity which the Pagans practised in their religious ceremonies.[2]

St. Paul, in a few words, sums up the religious life of the Gentiles before the time of Christ. "Because," writes the Apostle, "when they

[1] Cf. Lagrange, O.P., *La Methode Historique*, pp. 205, 206.
[2] Ibid.

knew God they have not glorified Him as God, nor given thanks, but became vain in their thoughts, and their foolish heart was darkened. For professing themselves to be wise they became fools. And they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of a corruptible man and of birds and of four-footed beasts and of creeping things. Wherefore God gave them up to the desires of their hearts and to uncleanness, to dishonour their own bodies among themselves." [1]

Religion is not pure metaphysics, but makes at the same time an appeal to the mind, the will, and the heart. According to the words of St. Paul, quoted above, the Gentiles who knew God did not worship Him as God, but " they changed the glory of the incorruptible God into the likeness of the image of corruptible man." What natural reason taught them, from the study of creation, concerning God, they permitted to become obscure and corrupt in practical life.

It is beyond reasonable doubt, therefore, that some great influence is needed in the world to stem the tide of moral evil and corruption which—as both history and experience go to show—the forces of nature are practically unable to cope with. With the Jews this abiding force was realized in their continued intercourse with God. Christianity is the perfection of Judaism,

[1] Rom. i. 21-24.

and Christ came to teach, not merely a nation, but the world. To keep Christianity in the world as a supernatural religion, Christ knew that the mere deliverance of His doctrine was not sufficient. Neither could a mere fallible organization continue the work initiated by Him; for the truths of revelation are not mere natural truths, but truths which exceed the capacity of unaided reason. Again special help is needed for making such a high code of morality as Christ's efficient in practical life. Our Saviour, therefore, left behind Him both an infallible Church and a sacramental system. Referring to the adaptability of the latter to human nature, St. Thomas teaches: "It belongs to Divine Providence to make provision for each thing according to its condition, and therefore Divine Wisdom has provided aids to salvation in the form of certain corporeal and sensible signs which are called Sacraments." [1] Again he writes: "The remedy should be applied to man from the source from which he incurs the disease. If purely spiritual things be offered to him, his mind, since it is entirely immersed in corporeal things, cannot apply itself to them." [2] He further adds: "Man is humiliated . . . in having to receive help from corporeal things. . . . He is also preserved from hurtful and superstitious operations by the health-giving exercise of the Sacraments." [3]

[1] *Sum. Theol.* P. III. Q. LXI. art. 1.
[2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

III.

The tendencies of a fallen nature, corrupt associations, traditions, and prejudices, are amongst the evils which make the practice of orthodox religion difficult. "The sense of right and wrong," writes Cardinal Newman, "which is the first element in religion, is so delicate, so fitful, so easily puzzled, obscured, perverted, so subtle in its argumentative methods, so impressionable by education, so biassed by pride and passion, so unsteady in its course, that in the struggle for existence amid the various exercises and triumphs of the human intellect, the sense is at once the highest of teachers and the least luminous." [1] The same author also writes: "Those higher sciences, morals and religion, are not represented to the intelligence by intuitions and notes, strong and obvious, such as those which are the foundation of physical science." [2]

It is in vain that one turns for a remedy to the philosophic systems of ancient Greece, to the schools of Plato, to the Stoics, or even to Aristotle. These philosophers, it is true, professed to teach the duties of citizenship, and even not a few of man's religious and moral obligations, yet their philosophy fails to solve many of our

[1] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, pp. 60, 61.
[2] *Idea of a University.*

doubts, whilst the perusal of their writings leaves the heart restless and unsatisfied. Not merely are they unable to offer practical remedies for moral evil, they even fail to present us with a philosophic or systematized form of religion. "Men value Plato," writes Mr. Balfour, "for his imagination, for the genius with which he hazarded solutions for the secular problems which perplex mankind, for the finished art of his dialogue, for the exquisite beauty of his style. But even if it could be said—which it cannot—that he left a system, could it be described as a system which as such has any effectual vitality?" [1] "It would be difficult," he adds, "to sum up our debts to Aristotle. But, assuredly, they do not include a tenable theory of the universe." [2] Of the Stoics, he writes: "The Stoic scheme of life may still touch our imagination; but who takes any interest in their metaphysics? Who cares for their soul of the world?" [3]

The poorest and most illiterate Catholic knows more about religion than the wisest among the Greeks, and an old woman with her beads can turn her mind to Mysteries which were beyond the mental horizon of the Peripatetic philosophers of old, of the wise men who walked in the Porch or the Academy at Athens, of Pythagoras or Socrates.

[1] *Foundations of Belief*, p. 157.
[2] Ibid.
[3] Ibid., pp. 157, 158.

If we turn our thoughts to the non-Christian religious systems which have most interested the students of comparative religion—Buddhism and Mohammedanism—we are equally disappointed. History tells us that the founders of these two systems received from nature a strong religious sense, yet a passing glance at both systems reveals—even from the view-point of natural religion—their hopeless inadequacy.

Buddhism in practice has sunk in many places into idolatry; but even the doctrines as delivered by Gaudama or Gautama are glaringly defective. There is nothing about God the Creator and the First Cause in Buddhism; whilst it propounds in an extravagant way the theory of metempsychosis or the transmigration of souls. Buddha himself was at intervals a king, a merchant, a beggar, an elephant, a lion and a dove. The Buddhist system, reduced to its logical consequences, excludes the doctrine of the spirituality and immortality of the soul. It makes the affections and desires of man essentially evil, so that perfection should consist in getting rid of human affections and desires. The ultimate goal of human existence is Nirvana, absolute rest, or even annihilation. In the ethics of Buddhism there is little room for the Christian virtues. The attempt to annihilate the passions possesses little in common with the Christian law of self-restraint (which asks us to subordinate our passions to the laws of reason); whilst a

self-sufficient asceticism precludes a healthy outlook on the world, on man, or even on God.[1] The statue of Buddha, exhibited in a Buddhist temple, represents a person absorbed in active or passive introspective self-complacency. It presents an unhealthy contrast to the image of a medieval Catholic saint, which typifies a person hurried on to healthy action by the charity of Christ.[2]

Mohammedanism brings even less solace to the anxious soul. It excludes from faith the doctrine of the Trinity, and permits polygamy and divorce. There is no sacrificial rite in the teaching of Mohammed. Its moral code is not one which would appeal to the aspirations of a spiritual soul, whilst a gloomy fatalism stagnates the social life and environment of the followers of Islam. The system offers no suggestion about a change of heart, or sorrow for sin, or union with God; whilst its fasts and pilgrimages were introduced as a means to serve in the "Holy War" against the Christians. It has been truly said that "the Mohammedan religion itself brings no principle of progress into the world, but much rather stereotypes a low form of civilization, and is not by accident, but by essence, the opponent of all higher culture."[3]

[1] Cf. *Sacred Books of the East*, ed. by Max Müller; *Buddhist Sects in Japan*, *Dublin Review*, Jan., 1895, p. 25; Rhys Davids, *Buddhism*, 1882.

[2] Cf. Mr. Chesterton's *Orthodoxy*, p. 241.

[3] Devas, *Key to the World's Progress*, p. 47.

IV.

The failure of philosophy and of every non-Christian form of religion to satisfy man's heart should alone convince us of the necessity of faith, of the virtue of religion, and the other helps given to us by Christ. The question of religion is such a momentous one that it cannot reasonably be left to the mere caprice of men; and as the question of a future state has been settled by God, so must the means to obtain it have been arranged by Him. Religion is bound up with the eternal lot of the human soul, and the danger is that a certain kind of religious sentiment or mere natural devotion may pass muster as the genuine article, whereas it is only supernatural religion, based on faith, which counts in the struggle for eternal life. If a person, therefore, finds on examination that he is not in the Church of Christ, where true religion is found, his duty becomes at once obvious, and no amount of devotion or even strong religious feeling, arising from the religious environment of his life, can make up for supernatural religion. "Nature," writes Cardinal Newman, "can do so much and go so far; can form such rational notions of God and of duty, without grace, or merit, or a future hope. . . . Education and intercourse with others can so insinuate into the mind what really does not belong to it; grace, not effectual, but inchoate, can so plead, and its pleadings look so like its fruits; and its

mere visitations may so easily be mistaken for its in-dwelling presence, and its vestiges, when it has departed, may gleam so beautifully on the dead soul that it is quite impossible for us to conclude, with any firmness of argument, that a certain opinion is true, or a religious position safe, simply on account of the confidence or apparent excellence of those who adopt it. . . . It is something, indeed, to be peaceful within, but it is not everything. It may be the stillness of death." [1]

When we examine religion on the objective side we find that it is nothing else than the sum total of our moral obligations to God. Subjectively, and as a moral virtue, it is in the will, where it disposes the person who possesses it to give to God, as the Supreme Lord and Master of the universe, the worship that is due to Him. It presupposes a correct, if not a full, knowledge of God; and in practical life it demands the operations of many faculties, the impulses, feelings and emotions, the external acts of worship, sacrifice, adoration and prayer.[2] The impulses and emotions cannot be healthy, if they are not properly directed by the higher, more spiritual and internal operations. If the intellect is in error it vitiates every operation depending on it from those of the will to the smallest act of external religious observance. St. Augustine

[1] *Difficulties of Anglicans*, vol. i. p. 94.
[2] *Sum. Theol.* Ia. IIae. Q. XCIX. art. 3.

stigmatizes all such misdirected acts as lying acts, and, since they dishonour, rather than honour, God, he considers them most unacceptable to Him.[1] St. Thomas confirms the words of St. Augustine, and adds that our instincts are not a sufficient guide, nor is the worship prompted by them worthy of God's service. "Before the written law," writes the Angelic Doctor, "the just were sufficiently instructed by their own internal instincts as to the manner of serving God; while others imitated them. But afterwards men were instructed by exterior precepts in this matter, and to ignore these is to be offensive (*to God*)."[2]

Mr. Chesterton, referring to the Reformation theology, says that it let the virtues loose as well as the vices. Some of the Reformation and post-Reformation people championed individual virtues or phases of virtues so persistently, as to altogether ignore the practice of the others. Perhaps, it may be said, with equal truth, that the novel doctrines of the sixteenth-century Reformers let the religious impulses loose, by cutting them off from the virtue of religion and from faith. A more dangerous thing could hardly be thought of in connexion with religion. Blind zeal and fanaticism can be made to sanction almost any crime. One

[1] Cf. *Lib. de Mendacio*, cc. x., et xiv.; et *Lib. ad Consentium contra Mendacium*, c. iv., Migne, *P. L.* tom. xl.

[2] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. xciii. art. 1 ad 2.

has only to read Reformation history to learn the evils attendant on the claim to set up private judgment in opposition to systematized religion.

It was a bold stroke ; but it meant the destruction of faith and supernatural religion. As a consequence, many Lutherans were driven to extreme Pietism, while others, discarding religious feeling in theory, were driven to the opposite pole, to Socinianism and Rationalism. Extreme Pietism and religious enthusiasm in Germany developed into the darkest and most fearful fanaticism. The Herrnhuters and Muckers taught errors similar to those of the ancient Gnostics, and were themselves guilty of the most shameless excesses.[1] Dr. Hase of Leipzic, a Protestant divine, tells us of a woman who thought that she was sent like Christ to redeem the world, and so permitted herself to be crucified.[2] Puritanism, Religious Revivals and Awakenings supply us with examples in sufficient number to indicate the possibilities of religious feeling, when, loosed from the moorings of faith, it is allowed to run riot.

Rationalism tried to find a background for religion in reason alone. It received its first impulse from the school of Biblical exegesis. Among its protagonists were Micheles and Morus. But while some, even among the

[1] Cf. *Memoir of Dr. Moehler*, p. xlvii.
[2] *Kirchengeschichte*, p. 530.

Rationalists, tried to save at least the Ethics of Christianity, extremists, like Eichhorn and Reimar, looked upon every phase of Christianity as a passing phenomenon. Philosophers, including the English Deists, with Voltaire, Rousseau, and the Encyclopedists in France, helped on the work of religious iconoclasm. In the literary world, Herder, Schelling, Lessing, Goethe and Schilling, contributed to the work of disintegration and professed themselves the protagonists of a new Paganism. It is true, some Protestant theologians, such as Neander and Platt, tried to check the evil, and find for religion a basis in reason and faith ; but the theological armoury supplied to them could not protect them in the warfare. Besides, these apologists did not themselves agree even in essentials. Schleiermacher, as well as Neander and Tholuck, erred on the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity. The latter, in fact, considered the doctrine an invention of the Schoolmen.[1] One is not surprised, therefore, to find curious theories concerning the *nature* of religion arise out of the theological chaos created by Protestantism. The orthodox and traditional views concerning faith and religion were lost. Some thought the religious instincts which men possess inconvenient in practical life, and so attempted to trace them to causes other than the normal relations

[1] *Memoir of Dr. Moehler*, p. xliii.

existing between man and God. Even Cicero would have blushed at this perversion of our nobler instincts by philosophic Rationalism. Kant and Schelling, without committing themselves to extreme views, ignored some of the essential elements of religion. The former looked upon it as the mere recognition of our duties to God. The latter defined it as the intellectual intuition of the Absolute. Jacobi and Renan refused to give even an illuminative background to religion, and attempted to trace it to a blind instinct of our nature. Mr. Herbert Spencer, in recent years, speaks of the religion of the Unknowable,[1] and Comte and Frederic Harrison, of the religion of Humanity.[2]

V.

The theories which have been propounded by non-Catholics regarding the *origin* of religion indicate a perverted religious sense. An orthodox religious sentiment is so bound up with faith and religion as to be incompatible with the false theories put forward by certain writers, who, in their attempts to explain the beginnings of religion, have advocated views which, to say the least, are non-Christian. Some, for instance,

[1] "Religion: Retrospect and Prospect," *Nineteenth Century*, January, 1884.

[2] "The Ghost of Religion," ibid., March, 1884.

have endeavoured to trace religion to the inventions of statesmen, who first introduced it into the world for political reasons; as if religion were not too deeply rooted in man's nature to be explained away as the invention of some political diplomatist or adventurer. Political reformers, like Solon and Lycurgus, it is true, did make use of religion as a basis for their work, but such an attempt would be useless if men were not by nature religious.[1] In proof of this we have some of the Deists, such as Renan, sometimes yielding to their better instincts in trying to find a substitute for religion. "If you ask me," said Strauss, "if we have still any religion, I answer you yes or no, according to what you understand by religion."

Other theorists attempted to trace religion to a contract or compact established between the rulers and their people. Such a theory is even more absurd than that of Rousseau's *Contrat Social*. The makers of such a religious contract or their representatives can, if they wish, dissolve partnership, and so drive religion from the world. But common sense and the innermost promptings of our heart rebel against such a possibility.

Neither does religion come from our proximity to the influence of the powers of nature. The fancy or imagination is not the seat of religion;

[1] Cf. Schanz, *A Christian Apology*, English trans., vol. i. p. 75.

nor is it merely in the understanding. If, according to Herbert Spencer, it originated in the dreams of the savage, or in his reflections on his own shadow, it is strange that it has such a hold on the educated classes, and that where due attention is given to the development of every faculty in man, education, instead of weakening, rather tends to strengthen the religious convictions. But Spencer, in common with others of the Darwinian school, looks, of course, upon religion as the result of a mere evolutionary process in man, just as man himself is only a fuller development of the ape.

We have alluded to these different theories regarding the origin of religion in order to show what the results of human speculation can be when reason and the religious feelings alone are taken as guides in matters of religion. When faith and the virtue of religion were rejected there was nothing left but what some have called the "clothes of religion." The Reformers began the work. They took away the realities, and left only the external finery. The extreme Pietists tried to pass these off as if the substantials of religion lay beneath them. But people soon detected the difference between the shadow and the substance.

Rationalism attempted to find in reason a substitute for supernatural faith, but, the clothes of the old religion not fitting well, men soon got weary of all religion, and began

to claim complete religious autonomy, to the exclusion of authority, while some even entertained hopes of driving religion, as a usurper, out of human life.

VI.

The faith and religion of the Catholic remain ever the same. A strong proof of the orthodox position of the Church is the terrible *impasse* to which religion has been brought by those who have recklessly opposed her claims. Besides, she is considered the only formidable enemy of those who hope to drive religion and all order out of society. *A bas l'église* is the watchword of the Continental Atheists, a watchword which is re-echoed by the Anarchists, extreme Socialists, Freemasons, and all who wish to overthrow authority, human and Divine.

Catholic faith is the source of Catholic religion. Doctrine and truth stimulate and protect the religious sense and serve to check religious feeling where it is extravagant. In this way religion is vivified and made part of a systematized whole. The Church of Christ is an organized society which legislates for, and directs, the supernatural life of her children. She cannot change the doctrine which she teaches, nor are her children free to worship God as they choose. Cardinal Newman felt the reasonableness of the

Church's claims long before he became a Catholic. "From the age of fifteen," he wrote, "dogma has been the fundamental principle of my religion; I know no other religion; I cannot enter into the idea of any other sort of religion; religion as a mere sentiment is to me a dream and a mockery." Again he wrote: "I was confident in the truth of a certain definite religious teaching based upon the foundation of dogma, viz., that there was a visible Church with Sacraments and rules which are the channels of invisible grace." [1]

The Catholic Church also sets her face against false mysticism. She discountenances and condemns the novel *arcana* of visionaries such as Swedenborg and Miller. She puts a restraint on the religious affections where there is danger of excess, and she has no sympathy with those who are indifferent to the voice of authority. We have an example of this in a beautiful story told by Longfellow in one of his poems.[2] A monk while gazing upon the face of Our Lord, in a vision, heard the bell summoning him to attend the poor at the door. Notwithstanding the delight and joy he felt in the presence of the celestial Visitant, he promptly obeyed. When his work was done he returned to his cell, and found the figure of Our Lord larger and more radiant than when he left. The words which greeted his ear

[1] *Apologia pro Vita Sua*, p. 49, ed 1878.
[2] *The Legend Beautiful.*

indicated to him that obedience and duty are more precious before God than are even the joy and sweetness of Divine ecstasy. "Hadst thou stayed," said the voice, "I must have fled."

Supernatural religion is an exotic amongst us. It can never flourish if only ordinary means are taken to protect it. The *fauna* and *flora* of tropical countries must die if transplanted to frigid or even temperate climes. If they are to live we must make provision for them ; so it is with revealed religion. It must die if treated as if it were indigenous to the soil ; hence the supernatural claims of the Church, her infallibility, her safeguards for truth, even her anathemas.

If civil society takes means to prevent extreme egoism and individualism, with how much greater reason must the Church take such precautions. Yet "in the eighteenth century," a certain writer tells us, "a theory arose that the maximum of public good would arise from each man seeking unhindered his own ends without any regard for the public weal. But the bitter experience of the waste of national resources, the waste of lives and goods . . . is the best reply to the imagined harmony of private aggrandisement and public wealth."[1]

[1] Devas, *The Key of the World's Progress*, p. 135.

VII.

From what has been said about the religious sense and the need of faith and authority as directing forces in religious life we can see at once how untenable is the position of the Modernists condemned by our Holy Father Pius X. in the Encyclical, *Pascendi Dominici gregis*. After separating faith from science, or rather, religious sentiment from the guidance of faith, Modernism gives us a vague, misguided religious sense as the ultimate court of appeal rather than that authority which was left by Christ on earth to be the guardian of faith, and even of the religious sentiment itself. The Modernists, it is true, would concede to the Church the power of sanctioning doctrine; but as the material of dogma is provided by the religious sense itself, and not by external revelation, the Teaching Church must evidently be guided by the religious sentiment; and, therefore, the Modernists, instead of giving her the lead, would drag her bound to the triumphant car of Neo-Kantianism. The following quotation from the Pope's Encyclical shows the undue prominence given by Modernists to the subjective feelings, and how the very principle on which their theory rests destroys all supernatural religion: "The explanation, then, of religion," the Holy Father tells us, "is, according to the Modernists, to be sought in man himself, and

since religion is a form of life, it is to be found altogether in man's life. Thus the principle of religious immanence is affirmed. Now the first need of every vital phenomenon, to which category religion has been said to belong, is to be sought in some kind of need or impulse; but its beginnings, to speak more precisely of life, is to be placed in some motion of the heart which is called a feeling." With the Modernist this feeling is, in fact, faith itself. "Since God," they say, "is the object of religion, we must absolutely infer that faith, which is the beginning and foundation of every religion whatsoever, must consist in some intimate feeling which arises from a need of the Divine. . . . The need of the Divine, in a mind disposed towards religion, stirs, according to the tenets of Fideism, without any antecedent judgment of the mind, a certain peculiar feeling, and this holds in itself both as its object and its intimate cause the very Divine Reality, and in some way unites it to God. This feeling is what Modernists call faith, and for them it is the beginning of religion."

According to the principles of Modernism there is only a difference of degree between the different religions professed by men. The religious sense is natural to man, and since every one, in a greater or less degree, possesses what is natural to him, so everyone possesses the true religion, even though some may have it more perfectly than others. It is unnecessary to comment

further on such fundamentally erroneous teaching. Not merely does it uproot supernatural faith and religion, but it does not even make allowance for the possibility of their existence. Faith, to be of any value, must have a basis in reason. We are not asked to embrace it blindly. On the contrary we are bound to take cognisance of the objective *criteria* which point to it. "The exhibition of credentials," writes Cardinal Newman, "that is, of evidence, that it is what it professes to be, is essential to Christianity as it comes to us." [1]

The isolation of sentiment from reason and faith in the orthodox sense is merely the application of Kantian philosophy to Christian apologetics. But an irreconcilable dualism runs through the philosophy of Kant; and, just as Luther asserted that there is no possible relationship between faith and charity, so Kant went further and separated religion from morality, the judicial order from the moral, faith from science, religious sentiment from faith. As Modernism is based on the principles of evolution and the philosophy of Kant, it has been properly spoken of by the Holy Father as a synthesis of all heresy. Its advocates may indeed rank with Harnack and others, who pride themselves in being the "gravediggers of all dogma." [2]

"The multitude of men," writes Cardinal

[1] *Gram. of Assent, Inference and Assent in Religion*, p. 387, ed. 1891.
[2] Harnack, *Dogmengeschichte*.

Newman, " are not consistent, logical or thorough; they obey no law in the course of their religious views." [1] But if men were only consistent and used the *Organum investigandi* of which Newman speaks, it would logically lead them by an infallible succession even from "Atheism to Theism, and from Theism to Christianity, and from Christianity to Evangelical Religion, and from these to Catholicity." [2] The tendency, however, of the unbalanced mind, the pseudo-scientist, the unspiritual, and the proud, is rather the other way, and so we need not be surprised to find even Catholics, who ignore the authority inseparable from systematized religion, soon leave the Catholic Church, and in the end give up religion altogether.[3]

[1] *Grammar of Assent*, note 11, ed. 1891. [2] Ibid. [3] Ibid.

CHAPTER V.

The Formal Object of Faith.

I.

The object of a faculty, virtue, or habit is either material or formal. The material object comprises everything to which the faculty, virtue or habit extends; thus, in the science of geometry, the conclusions arrived at by the geometrician are the material object. The formal object is that objective element by which the material object is attained; as in the same science of geometry the formal object is the principles by which the conclusions are obtained.[1] It is the formal object, however, which differentiates, determines, and specifies the faculty, habit or virtue; thus the astronomer and naturalist may demonstrate the same truth, but as they proceed from different principles, and by different methods of demonstration, the science of astronomy differs from natural science.[2]

In treating of the faculties of the soul, and the habits or virtues which perfect them, philosophers and theologians usually define them in relation to their formal object. It is by the formal object that the faculty, virtue, or

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 1.
[2] Ibid. P. I. Q. I. art. 1 ad 2.

habit is determined; hence the Angelic Doctor writes: "Nothing is subject to any power, or habit, or even act, unless through its formal object; as colour cannot be seen unless through light, and a conclusion cannot be known unless by means of demonstration." [1]

Since a habit or virtue determines the faculty in which it inheres to a certain determined mode of operation, it follows that a virtue or habit must be less indetermined and more circumscribed than the faculty which it perfects. St. Thomas exemplifies this truth by a comparison: "A superior power or habit," he says, "refers to its object in a more universal way than an inferior power or habit; thus the common sense attains to a thing inasmuch as it is an object of sense; but the sensible contains the visible and the audible; and therefore the common sense, although one power, extends to the objects of the five senses." [2]

The description just given of the formal object properly applies to what is known as the formal object *quo*. It is the formal object *quo* which leads to the conclusion, and which is the ultimate reason of the assent or the adherence of the faculty to the material object; thus, in vision, the formal object *quo* is light, for without light there can be no adherence of the faculty of vision to colour, or to the coloured object.

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 3.
[2] Ibid. P. I. Q. I. art. 3 ad 2.

The formal object *quo* is correctly designated an object by the schoolmen, although it is rather the formal objective element by which the material object is attained and possessed. Light, it is true, cannot lead the eye to the coloured object unless it is in some way perceived by the eye, and is therefore, as such, an object, but light is not the proper object of the sense of sight; it has been created as a means to an end, and the eye is not satisfied with light, but through it attains its own proper object.

That this formal object be operative there must exist in the subject a corresponding power or virtue to which it is related; therefore John of St. Thomas writes: "On the part of the power there is . . . a certain virtue or light habilitating or determining the power; thus, in the organ of sight there exists a certain illumination or light belonging to the power of seeing, and in the intellect a habit or light which determines it to the act of understanding." [1]

The formal object *quo* must not be confounded with the subjective element corresponding to it, and to which it is related. The first is objective, and can, even directly, be the object of the faculty, habit, or act; whereas the second is subjective, and cannot, at least directly, be an object, although it may be so by reflex action.[2]

[1] Q. I. de fid. disp. 1 art. 1.
[2] Cf. J. a S. Thom., O.P., ibid.

The objective element operating with the subjective determines the nature of the act; for the same material object may be attained by operations specifically distinct. The material object, therefore, although generic, is not subjected to the faculty, habit, or act as generic, but inasmuch as it is specified or determined by the formal object *quo* or by the motive. In this way the material object is brought within the sphere, or under the influence, of the faculty.

The object thus specified and differentiated is called the formal object *quod*, which is that precise thing which is sought for in the material object. Thus colour, or the object as coloured, is the formal object *quod* of the sense of sight, for light, by reason of the colour which it imparts to a body, makes it the object of corporeal vision, and at the same time differentiates it from the other formal objects to which the same material object may be determined; hence the Angelic Doctor writes: "The unity of a power and habit should be considered in relation to the object, not indeed as it is considered materially, but according to the formal nature of the object; as, for instance, a man, an ass, a stone agree in the same formal element of colour, which is the object of sight." [1] This formal object *quod* is sometimes called the primary object or the proper subject of the faculty, virtue, or science, as the case may be.

[1] *Sum. Theol.* P. I. Q. I. art. 3.

II.

Faith is a virtue, and has consequently both its material and formal objects. The material object of faith comprises all revealed truth; for faith extends to everything revealed by God. "If we consider," writes St. Thomas, "those things materially to which faith assents, they comprise, not only God, but also many other objects."[1]

The formal object *quod* of Divine faith, which for convenience sake we shall call its primary object, is God the First Truth considered in Himself. The formal object *quo*, which is also called the motive of faith, or simply the formal object, is the authority of God in revelation; or, as theologians say, the formal object *quod* in faith is the First Truth in *essendo*, the formal object *quo* is the First Truth in *dicendo*. The latter supposes not only God's veracity, but also extends to His knowledge and wisdom.[2] "The First Truth," says John of St. Thomas, "can be taken in three ways: (*a*) as existing, (*b*) as knowing, (*c*) as speaking. In the first sense it is transcendental . . . and for that reason God is said to be true, inasmuch as He is distinguished from false gods, and really possesses the Divinity; in the second sense truth is formal, and implies the adaptation of the mind to the thing known;

[1] Ibid. P. I. Q. I. art. 1.
[2] Billuart, O.P., Tract. de fid., dissert. 1, art. 1.

in the third sense truth reveals itself, and expresses to us through some sign the truth already known." [1]

The Eternal Truth, under its first or transcendental aspect, is the primary object of faith. In the third aspect it is the motive of faith; or it is truth considered in its ethical bearings. In this sense, however, it supposes, as a necessary condition, at least formal truth, or the eternal harmony which exists between the Divine Mind and the object known, or, in other words, the inerrancy of God.

A number of reasons can be advanced to show that the primary object of faith is God the First Truth, considered in Himself, or as He is the true God, and therefore distinct from all false gods. St. Paul expresses this truth in his first Epistle to the Thessalonians when he writes: "In every place your faith which is to God is perfect." [2] And again, in his Epistle to the Ephesians, he writes: "One Lord, one faith." [3] Faith, therefore, according to the Apostle, is one, because its primary object, God, is one, and to this one object faith primarily and principally tends.

This doctrine is confirmed by the teaching of the Fathers of the Church; thus St. Dionysius writes: "Faith is concerning the simple and ever-existing truth." [4] And St. Augustine tells us

[1] Tract. de fid., disp. 1, art. 1.
[2] 1 Thess. i. 8.
[3] Ephes. iv. 5.
[4] *De Divin. Nom.* c. v. ii.

that "the first and great office of faith is to believe in the True God." The same holy doctor, in teaching that Christ is the way to the perfect knowledge of God, thus writes: "That the mind might, with confidence, approach to truth, God, Who is Truth Itself, when the Son of God assumed human nature . . . laid the foundations of, and established, the faith, that a way might be open to God for man, and that through a God." [1] Faith, then, which through Christ is the way to God, is meaningless, unless inasmuch as it directs the mind to God. Whatever else therefore faith may deal with materially, whether it be the merits of Christ, or Grace, or the Sacraments, these are all objects of faith only in so far as they bring the soul to God; hence St. Thomas tells us that "the truths of faith do not fall under the assent of faith, unless inasmuch as they refer in some way to God, since by certain effects of the Divinity man is helped to tend to the fruition of God." [2]

Theological arguments are not wanting to establish the same truth; thus, the primary object of faith is identical with the primary object of the Beatific Vision. But in the Beatific Vision the primary object is God in Himself; consequently, God is also the primary object of supernatural faith. Again, faith is a theological virtue, but the primary object of a theological

[1] *De Civit. Dei*, lib. ix., c. ii. [2] *Sum. Theol.* P. I. Q. I. art. 1.

virtue is God, either through the Attribute of Goodness, as in charity, or the First Truth, as in faith.

Faith is distinguished from the moral virtues chiefly because it has God for its primary object. Even the virtue of religion, which is the most perfect of the moral virtues, has not God in Himself, but the worship of God, as its primary object; hence God is not the formal object *quod* of religion, but is rather what theologians call the object *cui*. In the same way, prophecy does not refer primarily to God, but rather to something temporal, and is not, in consequence, a theological virtue; and this is so even though the prophet, as such, assents to prophetic truth on the authority of Divine revelation. A prophet may therefore be a true prophet, such as Balaam was, and yet be without Divine faith.

From what has been said it follows that God is the primary object of faith, inasmuch as He is the One, True God, distinct from all gentile gods, or inasmuch as He is Truth itself, or as He is pure, unparticipated Being. He is the primary object of faith, because He is Truth Itself, and therefore because He is Divine.

Even though the object of charity—which is a Divine attribute—is, from a human point of view, less perfect than the object of faith, yet the virtue of charity is more perfect than the virtue of faith. An act of charity unites the lover with God, and although, metaphysically

or in the order of *being*, its object is less perfect than the object of faith; yet formally and as an object it is more perfect, for charity really unites with God, whereas an act of faith does not so unite the believer with God; for "the object of faith is absent from the intellect." [1] It is, therefore, obscure, and so the union of the understanding with God through faith is imperfect.[2]

God as the primary object of faith cannot be known by human reason; for if the primary object of faith is God in Himself, and if, as such, He surpasses human reason, every fact of Divine revelation is believed in inasmuch as it is subordinate to, and related to the First Truth in Itself, or in so far as God exceeds the limits of human reason. A person, therefore, believing in the unity of God, does not believe in that truth as it is demonstrable by reason; for the unity and existence of God can never be known adequately and *a parte rei* by human reason. The philosopher who knows of God's existence by the unaided light of human reason, if he also have faith, can say "I believe in God," because, as Sylvius remarks, "He believes in the existence of a God with a unity and attributes which cannot be known by demonstration." [3] St. Thomas, therefore, says "that the infidel who, by the unaided light of human reason, may know of

[1] Cf. S. Thom., Quaest. disp. de Veritate, Q. XIV. art. 9.
[2] Cf. Billuart, O.P., De fid., dissert. 1, art. 1.
[3] De objecto fid., Q. I. quaer. IV. art. v. conclus. ii.

God's existence, does not know God under those conditions which are determined by faith." [1]

Those revealed truths which are demonstrable by reason cannot, as demonstrated, fall under the formal object of faith, for faith must attain to its object as it is undemonstrated. Besides, the object of faith is referred to God as He exists in Himself and transcends human reason. Demonstrated truth is not related to God in this way; thus the existence of free-will in man, though a revealed truth, is also demonstrable by reason. It is not, however, demonstrable by reason as it is revealed; since, as revealed, it is related to God as the Author, not merely of nature, but of grace. Hence Billuart says: "If God revealed certain facts without revealing anything about Himself we could not have faith in the truths revealed; at least it would not be faith as a theological virtue." [2] In the science of metaphysics, however, the formal object is *being* abstracted from matter. This object is not as such, and in the cognitive order, necessarily related to God. A metaphysical truth, therefore, such as the existence of free-will, is demonstrated through a formal object which excludes this reference to God as the First Truth. For this reason St. Thomas teaches that faith and scientific knowledge are incompatible in reference to the same object.

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. II. art. 2 ad 3; Q. XIV. De Veritate, art. 9.

[2] De fid., dissert. 1, art. 1.

III.

The formal object or motive of faith is the authority of God in revelation. This authority implies not only the veracity of God, on account of which He cannot deceive, but it also connotes His Omniscience and Wisdom, on account of which He Himself cannot be deceived. The motive, therefore, of faith implies ethical truth, and connotes formal truth in God.

In the first place the motive of faith is the authority of God in revealing Divine truth. The motive of the assent in all faith, even human faith, is the authority of the witness, for faith supposes that the witness speaks what is true, and that what he says is certainly credible. "We do not believe a man," says Sylvius, "because he is just, or because he is wise, or because he is learned, but because he is truthful."[1] But God alone is the Witness of Divine Truth. "For this," said Christ, "came I into the world that I should give testimony to the truth"; [2] and St. Paul, writing to the Galatians, says of his doctrine: "Neither did I receive it of man, nor did I learn it, but by the revelation of Jesus Christ"; [3] and of the Thessalonians he says that they received his teaching, not as the "word of man, but, as it is indeed, the word

[1] De objecto fid., quaer. I., art. 1, conclus. ii.
[2] John. xviii. 37.
[3] Gal. i. 12.

of God." [1] The Angelic Doctor, therefore, writes: "The testimony of the First Truth has the same place in faith as the principle of demonstration in science," [2] and again: "faith . . . does not assent to anything unless in so far as it is revealed by God." [3]

The motive of any intellectual assent is either intrinsic evidence, which may be immediate or mediate, or the assent depends on authority or extrinsic evidence. In faith the evidence is not intrinsic; for "faith," as St. Paul tells us, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, "is the evidence of things that appear not." [4]

The Vatican Council therefore teaches that "we believe in the truths revealed by Him (*God*), not because of the intrinsic truth of the things (*revealed*), as if they were manifest through the natural light of reason, but on the authority of God Who reveals and Who can neither deceive nor be deceived." [5] The truths of faith, then, are accepted on extrinsic evidence; and since this is the Infallible Authority of God, Who is essential truth and goodness, there cannot be anything false or erroneous in faith. It is impossible that God could reveal what is false, as the Priscillianists erroneously thought; for lying is essentially evil and cannot under any circumstances be right.

[1] 1 Thess. ii. 13.
[2] Quaest disp. de Veritate, Q. XIV. art. 8 ad 16.
[3] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 1.
[4] Heb. xi. 1.
[5] Sess. III. c. 3, de fide.

"It does not follow," says St. Anselm, "that it is just to lie if God should wish to lie, but rather it follows that God does not exist." [1] Lying is, of its nature, evil, for it is an act "which falls on undue matter." [2] But God is essentially good; and to admit evil in Him is to destroy Him.

On the other hand the believer cannot accept on supernatural faith that which is false, for a virtue can only tend to what is good; and truth, even though it is not necessarily the good of the appetite, is, nevertheless, the good of the intellect. Besides, no act, as St. Thomas teaches, can be elicited from a power or habit, unless in so far as the act is influenced by its formal object. In faith this is the Infallible Authority of God, Who can neither deceive nor be deceived. The Council of Trent, therefore, teaches that there cannot be anything false in that which is from faith.[3]

The difficulties that may arise in connexion with this matter, either on the part of the person who acts as an inspired instrument of God, or on the part of the believer, can be easily explained. The inspired or holy persons of Sacred Scripture, who are said to have spoken things at variance with the canons of veracity, certainly did not lie under God's inspiration. In those places in which their veracity is questioned they did not speak as instruments of God, or if they did

[1] *Cur Deus Homo*, lib. i. c. 12.
[2] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. CX. art. 3.
[3] Sess. vi. c. 9.

so, they spoke in a figurative, mystical; or prophetic sense.[1] Again, an error in faith, in the case of the faithful who err through invincible ignorance, is to be attributed to human conjecture or frailty. The erroneous act is not elicited from faith; for, as the Angelic Doctor says: "Under the First Truth nothing false can exist, just as under *being* there cannot be *non-being*, nor under good evil." [2]

In this way faith differs from the virtues of the appetitive faculty, which have what is good for their object and not what is necessarily true; thus one may love a hypocrite because of the virtue which he seems to possess, or a person may give alms to an undeserving beggar.

Faith is both speculative and practical, and excludes the possibility of error in the practical as well as in the speculative order. In this it differs from a virtue like prudence, which always tends to what is true in the practical order, although it does not necessarily tend to what is true in the speculative order. A person, therefore, who, by mistake, adores a host which is not really consecrated, does not err in faith. Neither, if his criteria for judging are reasonable, is there a practical error of prudence, although his speculative judgment is misleading in judging that the host is really consecrated.[3]

[1] Cf. *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. CX. art. 3 ad 3.
[2] Ibid. Q. I. art. 3.
[3] Cf. Billuart, O.P., De fid., dissert. 1. art. 3.

The inerrancy of Divine faith is due to the fact that it is infused by God, and also because it tends of its nature to its primary object which is God, while it must at the same time harmonize with its formal object, or with the authority of God, Who can neither deceive nor be deceived. In this respect the infallibility of Divine faith is peculiar, as may be seen from comparing it with faith which rests on human authority; thus, heretics steadfastly believe in many things which are not objectively true. But their faith is not Divine. It is merely human; although with this human and erroneous faith is associated a conscience which some follow with most scrupulous care. For the practical errors of such a false conscience they are not responsible, unless in so far as their ignorance is culpable and vincible. On the contrary, so long as this conscience remains certain, they should follow it until they rectify it.

The possibility of such an erroneous conscience existing with good faith should make sincere people think seriously on this matter. That such a merely human and therefore non-meritorious faith—so far at least as a supernatural reward is concerned—exists among professing Christians, who contradict each other on the most profound truths of revelation, is certain; and the evil is regrettable, even when all possible allowances are made for circumstances, and the strong tendency in man to believe what is deeply

embedded in his mind and heart from early childhood.

Human and erroneous views on Christian doctrine may also be found amongst Catholics who imbibe from evil reading and other sources tenets incompatible with Catholic teaching, and who unwittingly assent to them, without knowing or adverting to their unorthodoxy. Yet, on account of the peculiar nature of the virtue of faith and of the supernatural gifts which accompany it, even the poorest and most illiterate Catholics, provided they live up to the teaching of the Church, are ready to detect error in the most subtle questions of faith. This, of course, is traceable to the Holy Ghost and to His gifts.

An examination of the nature of the virtue of faith should lead us on *a priori* grounds to postulate the existence of a living and infallible authority on earth to preserve it. If men are free to speculate on matters of faith, supernatural and Christian religion must soon vanish from human life. But Catholics are not free to do so, and yet no Catholic on that account feels his liberty restricted; just as he does not feel it restricted when he finds himself unable to attempt some work which far exceeds his physical powers. This unity of belief among Catholics may surprise some who do not understand either the peculiar nature of the virtue of faith, or the infallible authority which God has established to preserve it.

IV.

Faith, of its very nature, depends on authority, and therefore any attempt to claim for it intrinsic evidence must tend to destroy the very notion of orthodox faith, and to remove from the life of the Christian, not only the supernatural, but also the need of revelation and the authority of God. Although Rationalists, as distinct from Materialists, have a certain amount of reverence for what they are pleased to call religious faith, they, nevertheless, give it a meaning which distorts its nature and perverts its supernatural character. The Theologians of the Vatican Council thus sum up their views on this matter : "The Rationalists speak of a religious faith, but of a faith whose motive is not the authority of God in speaking to us, for they deny the existence of any revelation from God, so that they understand by faith a mere rational knowledge of the things which pertain to God and to religion. Semi-rationalists also refuse to admit that the authority of God, in speaking to us, and on account of which we are called believers, is the formal motive of faith. . . . They teach that every firm persuasion concerning God and Divine things is faith properly understood, and therefore we are called believers, even though the motive for embracing and holding the truth is not the authority of God ; for truth (they say) is to be

accepted on account of the intrinsic connexion of the ideas alone." [1]

Rationalists, therefore, are satisfied with what they call a natural revelation. They consider human reason sufficient in itself for faith; and, while applying the principles of evolution to religion, they claim that the historic faith, which has until now attained its highest form in Christianity, is passing away. The imperfections of the primitive forms of religion which found such a marked expression in symbolism and myth are not, they tell us, wholly wanting in Christianity. In the light of this new faith, a more perfect religion will supplant the old and imperfect one, and in it men will have a truer and nobler conception of religion and of God; for the new faith will depend on the light of reason, or on science and philosophy alone. This is the Rationalistic conception of pure faith, and it is not altogether modern.[2]

V.

From the philosophy of Kant a form of Rationalistic and religious faith has sprung which, perhaps more consistently than all others, represents an attempt to offer a philosophic

[1] *Acta et Decreta*, p. 327.

[2] Cf. Albert M. Weiss, O.P., *Reforme della religione*, pp. 1, 2, 3. Firenze, 1906.

apology for Protestantism. The tenets of the Rationalistic critics harmonize with the principles of that form of heresy which has found its best philosophical exponent in Kant. This school separates faith from the intellect, from science, and history, and labels it a product of the appetitive side of human nature. This seems to be the view of such writers as Schleiermacher, Paulsen, Ritschl, Schultz, and Sabatier.

It may be useful to consider in outline the Kantian and Neo-Kantian principles of philosophy from which not only the critics draw their conclusions, but also the Modernists, who, by a futile and absurd attempt to reconstruct Catholicism and reconcile it with any religion or no religion, have formulated theories which tend to destroy all religion, natural and supernatural.

According to Kantian Philosophy our universal ideas have no real objective value, but are mere subjective forms of thought in which the mind represents to itself, not the external object, but only the dispositions of the subject. From this it follows that in speculative knowledge we do not know the thing in itself (*das Ding an sich*), but only the disposition of the subject, or its representation of the subjective phenomena. There can be no metaphysical demonstration, therefore, of the existence of the object, but merely of the phenomena. And since the existence of God does not

fall within the sphere of sensible phenomena, it cannot be proved by metaphysical demonstration; while the principle of causality, even if it be admitted, has no objective value. It merely postulates a number of interdependent and subjective phenomena, with which God is not necessarily connected.

Man is, however, related to the Deity in some way, and, though inaccessible to the speculative reason, God is attainable by faith, which is hardly more than a sentiment or an adherence of the heart to God. Faith, according to Kant himself, is a *rational* adherence to the object inasmuch as it is in harmony with the postulates of the practical reason. The speculative reason, or the knowledge which is the outcome of it, does not extend to God, while the practical reason—which Kant seems to identify with the will—gives us religion and morality. In view of this teaching we can understand why Neo-Kantian and Modernist writers make use so frequently of the terms, *instinct*, *internal experience*, *moral energy*, *appetitive element*, *emotion*, when there is question of faith.

But it is rather from the negative side of Kant's philosophy than from its positive that Modernism is an offshoot. Even Kant attempted to give faith, or what he calls faith, a foundation in reason; but the Modernists make it a pure sentiment, and therefore a blind adhesion of the believer to the Unknowable. Neither, according

to Kant, are dogma and symbol necessary for all, but only for the uninitiated. The Modernists consider them necessary for all, since they correspond to a need in human nature itself. On this point they are less logical than Kant, for in their Agnosticism they reject with him the objective value of experience as a principle of knowledge.[1]

It is more correct, then, to trace Modernism directly to some of the disciples of Kant, such as Schleiermacher [2] and Sabatier [3] than to the philosopher of Koenigsberg himself. With the Neo-Kantists the intellectual element in religion and faith, though accidental, is not completely ignored. The imagination and mind work upon the subjective feeling or religious emotion, and produce in turn the mythological and ideological elements in religion. The mythological or the imaginative predominated in the primitive religions; in the more modern, and especially in Christianity, we have dogmatism, or dogmatic teaching. This teaching is not, however, the product of revelation in the orthodox sense, but is traceable to the religious sense. On this point the Neo-Kantian school has given the key to the Modernists.

On the other hand, many advanced Rationalists contend that the dogmatic element in religion

[1] Prof. Vermeersch, *Modernism*, Cath. Encyc. vol. x. p. 421.
[2] Cf. *Ueber die Religion* and *Der Christliche Glaube*.
[3] Cf. *Les Religions d'Autorite, la Religion de l'Esprit*.

is false. It is, they assert, not only outside the sphere of science, but it is also erroneous and misleading. It is the result of a blind sentiment and is therefore illusory. The Positivists even go so far as to proscribe religious faith altogether.

When false principles are once admitted they develop in divergent and even in opposite directions, so that while one writer declares himself independent of all philosophy another declares himself independent of all religion. To one, dogma is an excrescence, while another holds even the permanency of dogmatic beliefs. Kant himself adhered to the findings of the practical reason, because he thought that the speculative reason could not prove their impossibility. Fichte, on the contrary, attempted to prove that faith is in opposition to the speculative reason, since the speculative reason can show the impossibility of the reality of the objects of the practical reason. Hamilton and Mansel think that if such objects are not impossible they are—when gauged by the ordinary laws of human thought—at least inadmissable.[1]

The connexion between the views of the Modernists and the school of Kant is apparent. The Modernists deny the validity of the proof from reason of God's existence, and indeed of everything which transcends phenomena, such as

[1] Cf. Ollè-Laprune, *De la certitude morale*, pp. 203 et seqq. Paris, 1902.

miracles and prophecy. And since revelation itself and the authority of God have no objective value, they must, according to their teaching, be discarded by the scientist and historian. Internal and religious experience supplies everything to the believer, so that the determining element in faith and religion is not the authority of God, but rather a certain need of the subject which influences every religious thought, wish and emotion. Thus the formal object of faith vanishes completely from this system, and with it the very essentials of faith.

The Modernists do not, however, adhere to all the findings of the Neo-Kantian School. Schleiermacher advocated the permanency of dogma. The Modernists, according to their theory of doctrinal evolution, do not admit permanency of type. They advocate a change even in essentials. In this they have been upheld by Sabatier; but the latter was in turn influenced by the evolutionary theory of Herbert Spencer.

The immanent need in the subject, which is the determining influence in religion, is conditioned, they tell us, by certain evolutionary laws. This subjective need postulates a reality which is at the same time its complement and perfection; hence in man we have vital immanence. Religion is traceable to an interior sentiment which is excited by the need of something; this something which is undefined and indemonstrable is termed by the agnostic Modernist the

Unknowable. At first the need of the Unknowable is sub-conscious, but in favourable environment it rises to the threshold of consciousness, and becomes a vital activity, independent of any act of the mind, and gradually generates a sense which is active and capable of any experience of the Divine Reality.

The appearance of the Divine Reality, or the Unknowable, at the bar of consciousness is revelation; while faith is the adherence of the religious sense to the Unknowable through revelation. Sometimes the act of faith is styled by the Modernists an emotion, sometimes an apprehension of the Divine (not as an idea but as a reality), sometimes a dream or a vision (Tyrrell), sometimes an intuition (Loisy). It is anything, however, but an assent to Divine revelation on the authority of God.

In considering the authority of God in revelation, and the primary object of faith, it is of importance to note how the New Theologians corrupt the recognized conceptions of faith, its primary object, the motive of faith, and even revelation itself. The Modernist view of faith and religion, not only excludes from faith and supernatural religion the possibility of securing for either a foundation in reason, but it is even opposed to the common religious sense of mankind. Moreover, on the principles of the Modernists, there is not only an end to the supernatural in faith and religion, but also to inspiration,

to the Church, and to all doctrine. The New Theology admits no objective criterion, not merely for faith, but for any truth, and in attempting to find a common basis for all religious systems it has opened the way to Atheism and Pantheism. "To us, it seems, Venerable Brethren," writes Pius X, "the part of a madman, or at least the height of imprudence, to accept as true, without investigation, inner experiences of the kind that the Modernists deal in. But why, to put it briefly, if there is such virtue and certainty in these experiences, may not the same characteristics be granted to the experience which many thousands of Catholics have, that the Modernists are on the wrong road? Is this experience the only false and deceptive one? The greater part of mankind holds firmly, and will always hold, that by mere sentiment and experience, without the guidance of the light of the intellect, one can never come to the knowledge of God . . . if all the intellectual elements, as they say, are nothing but symbols of God, will not the very name of God or of the Divine Personality be a symbol. And if this is the case it will be possible to doubt of the Divine Personality, and the road is open to Pantheism. Thither also, to unmixed Pantheism, leads their other doctrine of Divine immanence. For we ask the question: Does this immanence leave God distinct from man or not? If it does, how then does it differ from Catholic teaching, or why reject the doctrine

of external revelation? If it does not, we have Pantheism."

That the Modernist system leads also to Atheism seems clear from the assertion that faith deals with the reality of the Unknowable; for since this doctrine can never remove the want of proportion between the intellect and the Unknowable, the latter must always remain unknown even to the believer; and therefore "if any religion will be had, it will be the religion of the Unknowable reality, and why this latter may not be the soul of the world, which some Rationalists speak of, we do not exactly see." [1]

VI.

Although Catholic theologians are not at liberty to question what the Church teaches, they are free to discuss many questions upon which the Church has not given her decision. Some even held opinions which are now considered untenable. Gabriel and Occam, for instance, considered Christ Our Lord to be the primary object of faith. Others held peculiar views regarding the motive of faith; thus William of Paris assigned, as the motive of faith, God's supreme Dominion on account of which men

[1] Encycl. *Pascendi.*

owe Him obedience and reverence. Aureolus considered it to be God in Himself, the First Truth; while Ripalda made it the Fidelity and Omnipotence of God.

Such views are now untenable, especially in the light of the teaching of the Vatican Council. It is still, however, open to question whether not only the authority of God but also revelation itself enters as an essential in the motive of faith. Some think that revelation itself is only a necessary condition for an act of faith, and would enunciate the motive of faith as follows: "I believe this truth because God Who has revealed it is truthful." Others, with more probability, teach that the revelation of the truth is a partial element in the motive of faith; for the words of the Vatican Council suggest that the motive of faith is not merely the authority of God, but that it is the authority of God *revealing*. Besides St. Paul, they say, appealed to revelation itself as a motive of faith,[1] while he also teaches that faith comes from hearing.[2] According to this view the motive of faith in a revealed truth should be enunciated thus: "I believe because God is truthful and has also revealed this truth."

Another question freely discussed by theologians deals with the acceptance of the authority of God itself. There is a difference of opinion

[1] Gal. ii. 2. [2] Rom. x. 17.

as to whether it is received on faith or by the light of reason. Some of those who hold that it is known by the light of reason say that it is immediately evident; others that it is mediately evident through the motives of credibility. Another opinion is that the motive of faith is received on faith, although it is not the proper object of the act of faith, but is rather the object in *actu exercito;* just as light is not the proper material object in vision, although it is the object *quo*.

We submit the following analysis of an act of faith, which may help to throw light on this difficult point. In this connexion we have (*a*) the presentation of the revealed truth; (*b*) the examination and judgment on the motives of credibility; (*c*) the consequent drawing of the will to the good, especially towards eternal life; (*d*) the will moving the intellect to assent to the truths of faith as to the greater good; (*e*) the assent on the authority of God.

From the foregoing summary it will be seen that the motives of credibility are preliminary to faith, and give faith a foundation in reason. They save the believer from a temerarious assent, and although the authority of God, as well as the motives of credibility, are received on intrinsic evidence, yet neither of these motives, as received in this way, moves to the act of faith, nor as such do they illuminate the mind in the act of faith itself. In the act of faith the authority of

God influences in a higher order, and so moves to faith as it is revealed, and not as it is otherwise evident; thus faith begins where reason ends. If this view be correct, the authority of God is accepted, both on the testimony of reason and of revelation; but as it is known by reason it is preliminary to faith. In the act of faith it is received on revelation or on its own testimony, just as light is, in the act of corporeal vision. The Angelic Doctor, therefore, teaches that the Divine Testimony is primarily of itself, and secondarily, of other things.[1] From this it follows that an act of faith (notwithstanding the opinion of some theologians[2]), is not discursive.

VII.

If the truths of faith are taken *in globo*, they are evident, not in themselves, but as they are credible. They are evidently credible. The evidence of their credibility produces at least moral certitude; and this certitude is distinct from the certitude of faith which, resting upon the authority of God, is much stronger. The truths of faith, then, although evidently credible, are not evidently true, nor even evidently possible; since their possibility, as well as their truth, depends upon the agreement of subject and

[1] Quaest. disp. De Veritate Q. XIV. art. 8.
[2] Cf. De Lugo, disp. vii., sect. 1.

object—an agreement which in faith is not evident. In this way the difference between the motives of credibility and the motive of faith may be understood. The latter, although it carries with it certitude of the truth which is believed in, does not bring evidence. The former brings both evidence and certitude of the credibility of the truths of faith, although it gives neither, when there is question of their truth. These motives of credibility are miracles, prophecy and other extrinsic arguments.[1]

Since the motive of faith does not bring with it intrinsic evidence of the truths of faith, it cannot, without Divine grace and the motion of the will, move the intellect to assent to revealed truth. The absence of intrinsic evidence in the material object of faith is not, however, a part of the motive or the formal object of faith. It is only a necessary condition for eliciting an act of faith. That it is not an essential in the motive of faith itself, may be seen from the fact that a person believes, not because the object is not evident to him, but on account of the authority or testimony of the Witness. The obscurity on the part of the object is, however, a necessary condition for faith, just as the apprehension of the end is a necessary condition for the motion of the will, or as the existence of a cause is necessary for the production of an effect.[2]

[1] Cf. Billuart, O.P., De fid., dissert. 1 art. 6.
[2] Ibid. art. 4.

The essential difference, then, between faith and the Beatific Vision does not arise from the fact that in faith the object is obscure, while in vision it is evident. The acts of faith and vision are essentially different, because in the act of vision there is intuition of the object, and therefore intrinsic evidence, while in that of faith the assent depends on authority or on extrinsic evidence. The acts of vision and faith, therefore, although different, are not opposed.

Even though intrinsic evidence of the truth is wanting in faith, yet the obscurity of the object does not exclude certitude and even evidence of the truths preliminary to faith—as, for instance, that God is true, that He must reveal what is true, and that He wishes us to understand the words which contain revealed truth according to their ordinary and accepted meaning. Moreover, one can have evidence even of revelation itself. That such evidence is compatible with Divine faith may be seen from the fact that even when all the preliminary truths are evident, the Mysteries of Faith still remain obscure, and the assent still depends on the authority of God. Thus it may be evident to a person that the Incarnation is a revealed truth; yet, although the evidence brings certitude, it does not bring Divine faith, nor does it throw interior light on the truth itself. Even the devils can have certitude, when they are convinced, from the evidence of the signs and motives, of

the credibility of the revelation of this Mystery, yet they have not faith in the Mystery itself. There is still room—notwithstanding such evidence—for the merit of faith, since the essence, and therefore the chief merit, of faith consists in assenting to the truth of the object revealed on the authority of God.

That the evidence of the revelation of a truth can exist with faith in that truth is manifestly the teaching of St. Thomas: "That manifestation alone excludes faith," he tells us, "by which the principal object of faith becomes apparent or known." [1] And again he writes: "If a prophet should foretell a future event on the word of the Lord, and make use of some sign, such as the raising of a dead man to life, the intellect of a person seeing such a sign would be forced to know that this truth was manifestly spoken by God Who does not lie, although the event which is foretold is not in itself evident; for this reason the motive of faith may still remain." [2] From these last words of the Angelic Doctor we infer that he is not here referring to the evidence of the motives of credibility, but to the evidence of revelation itself; for he tells us that the person in question is convinced because he is certain that the words "are *manifestly* spoken by God." [3]

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. V. art. 1.
[2] Ibid. art. 2.
[3] Cf. Billuart, dissert. I. art. 5.

The motive of faith is authority and not evidence immediate or mediate, so that in faith there is always room for the exercise of will. This is true even when we are in possession of faith itself, for it requires a good will to keep the faith, just as it takes a good will to acquire it. The will supplies for the lack of evidence, and in this consists the merit of faith; for if the truths were evident we would not be free to refuse our assent to them, and so the assent, being a necessary act, could not be meritorious.

CHAPTER VI.

The Material Object of Faith.

I.

The material object of Divine faith comprises the sum total of all the revealed truths to which supernatural and Divine faith extends. When the truths of revelation are not merely contained in the deposit of revelation, but are also proposed by the Church as revealed, then faith in them becomes Catholic as well as Divine. The Vatican Council teaches "that all those truths are to be believed in by Divine and Catholic faith which are contained in the Word of God, whether written or from tradition, and which are proposed by the Church . . . as Divinely revealed." [1] The express teaching of the Church is, however, only a condition for the acceptance of revealed truth, and is not an essential part of the formal object of Divine faith; and although Divine faith, of its nature, extends to all revealed truth, yet ordinarily the believer cannot know what is revealed without the authority of the Church.

The primary object of faith is God Himself, the First Truth. Other revealed truths are

[1] Sess. iii. c. 3, de fide.

secondary, and belong to the domain of faith only in so far as they have reference to God. "If we consider those things," writes the Angelic Doctor, "to which faith assents, they include not only God Himself, but also many other truths, although the latter do not fall under the assent of faith, unless in so far as they refer to God." [1] Again he writes: "The truth of the Divine Knowledge is such, that it is concerned first and above all with Uncreated Being; with creatures it is concerned in a secondary way; for in knowing Himself, He (God) knows all other things. Wherefore, faith, which joins man to the Divine Knowledge by his assent [to revealed truth], has for its principal object God Himself, but other things only in so far as they have reference to Him." [2] The Angelic Doctor's meaning is, that as God knows Himself primarily, and in Himself sees all things, so we, through faith, which is a participation of the Divine Knowledge, know God primarily, and other things secondarily, or inasmuch as they refer to God.

The primary material object of faith is therefore identical with its formal object *quod;* for the formal object *quod* is that which the virtue precisely seeks for in the material object, and this, in the case of faith, is always God. "Those things which belong to the Humanity of Christ,

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 1.
[2] Quaest. disp. De Veritate, Q. XIV. art. 8.

to the Sacraments, and to creatures, are of faith only is so far as they refer to God." [1]

St. Thomas distinguishes between the truths that pertain to the substance of faith, such as God's Existence and Providence, and other truths which are the expression of God's plan in dealing with His creatures. Thus he writes: "All the Articles of Faith are contained in some first credible truths as, for instance, in those of God's Existence and Providence in working out the salvation of men, as the Apostle teaches in his Epistle to the Hebrews, when he writes: 'For he that cometh to God must believe that He is, and is a rewarder to them that seek Him.' Our belief in God's Existence extends to all those things which we believe to have existed in God from eternity, and in which our beatitude consists. But belief in His Providence is confined to those things which in time have been dispensed by God for the salvation of men, and which are the way to beatitude. In like manner some truths under the latter heading are contained in others; thus the Incarnation, the Passion, and similar truths, are implicitly contained in the Redemption." [2]

As it pleased God to reveal in detail His designs in regard to man's salvation, explicit belief in the Incarnation, and consequently in the Trinity, is necessary for all. St. Thomas, therefore, writes: "For in the time of Grace,

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. i. ad i. [2] Ibid. Q. I. art. 7.

(i.e., under the New Dispensation), all are bound to explicit faith in the Trinity and Redemption."[1] Those who are instructed, and who know the teaching of the Church, or the Articles and propositions of Faith, are bound to explicit belief in the doctrines which they know the Church teaches, for "some truths are to be accepted by all, and at all times; some at all times, but not by all; some by all, but not at all times."[2] We have an example of the first class of truths in the Unity and Providence of God; of the second and third in the Trinity and Redemption; for even before the Law of Grace, explicit belief in these truths was, to those who knew them, necessary for salvation. In the New Dispensation, explicit belief in the Trinity and in the Redemption is, according to the Angelic Doctor, necessary for all.

II.

Theologians distinguish between the Articles of Faith and its doctrinal propositions, or rather show how one Article may contain several revealed truths. "Wherever," writes St. Thomas, "there is a truth which for some special reason is not apparent, there we have a special Article; but wherever there are many truths which for the same reason are not apparent . . . there the Articles are not distinguished; as, for example,

[1] Quaest. disp. de Verit. Q. XIV. art. 11. [2] Ibid.

the difficulty which arises in reference to the Passion of Christ differs from that which arises in connexion with the Resurrection, and consequently the Article on the Resurrection is distinct from the Article on the Passion. But as Christ's Passion, Death and Burial present the same difficulty, and when one is received there is no difficulty in receiving the others, the consequence is that these truths are included in one and the same Article." [1]

The distinction in the Articles of the *Creed*, according to this teaching, does not arise from any differences in their material object—for several truths materially distinct are included in the same Article—nor does the distinction arise from the primary object, or from the motive of faith, since the First Truth, whether as existing or as revealing, is one, while It is at the same time the principle of specific unity in faith. The distinction in the Articles of Faith is therefore traceable to the believer; thus the truth of Christ's Resurrection may not appeal to a man who has no difficulty about His death and burial. The distinction is to be sought, then, not in anything essential to the formal or material objects of faith, but in the degree of obscurity attached to the material object.[2] The Angelic Doctor writes: "There is not the same difficulty in all the truths which pertain to faith, since some are more

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 6.
[2] Cf. ibid. IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 6 ad 2.

obscure than others, and some are better known than others." [1]

Some theologians say that those truths only are Articles of Faith in which explicit belief is necessary for salvation. Others understand by the Articles of Faith that portion of faith, which was proposed by the Apostles for insertion in the Creed; hence they limit the Articles of Faith to the truths contained in the Apostles' Creed.[2]

It cannot be denied that belief in all the truths of faith is necessary, and even in those truths which are not inserted as Articles of the Creed. The ordinary faithful, it is true, are not bound to have explicit knowledge of all these truths. St. Thomas tells us that "all are not bound to believe explicitly in all the things which are of faith, but those only are bound who are appointed to be instructors in the faith, as are Prelates, and others who have the care of souls." [3]

The Pastors of the Church are bound then to a more explicit knowledge of revealed truth than are the ordinary faithful, or were even the spiritual guides of the people of Israel. In the time of the Law and Prophets, "the elders were not bound to have explicit belief in all the truths of faith." [4] They were obliged, nevertheless, to

[1] Quaest. disp. De Verit. Q. XIV. art. 11. ad 1.
[2] Cf. Suarez, S.J., De Fide disp. 2, sect. 5, no. 10.
[3] Quaest. disp. De Veritate, Q. XIV. art. 11.
[4] Ibid.

have explicit faith in the Redemption. But explicit faith in the Mystery of the Incarnation was not an Article to which at least the ordinary faithful were then bound, as they now are. What is true of the Pastors of Israel applies also to those philosophers and wise men among the Gentiles, who are supposed to have received from God the gift of faith.[1]

Since the complement of supernatural faith is the Beatific Vision, the Articles of Faith contain those truths which are, in a special way, the object of the Beatific Vision of the Blessed; hence those things which pertain to the Beatific Vision are contained in the Articles of Faith. St. John the Evangelist tells us what those truths are which the Blessed behold. "This is eternal life," he says, "that they may know Thee, the only true God, and Jesus Christ Whom Thou hast sent." [2] The Divinity and Humanity of Christ are, therefore, two fundamental truths which the beatified soul especially enjoys, and the Articles of Faith contained in the Creed point to one or other of these truths.[3]

Seven Articles of the Creed refer to the Divinity, or to the Unity of Nature and Trinity of Persons in God. On the Divine Unity there is one Article, while three Articles are devoted to each of the Three Divine Persons. The first four Articles

[1] Ibid.
[2] John xvii. 3.
[3] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 8.

of the Creed deal therefore with the Unity and Trinity in God; the fifth Article deals with God the Author of nature; the sixth with God the Author of grace; the seventh with God the Author of glory. The seven truths pertaining to the Humanity of Christ are (1) the Incarnation, (2) the Nativity, (3) the Passion, Death and Burial, (4) His descent into hell, (5) His Resurrection, (6) Ascension, and (7) His coming to judge mankind.[1]

Some divide the Creed into twelve Articles, apportioning six to the Divinity of Christ, and six to His Humanity. In this division of the Creed, the Conception and Nativity of Christ are contained in one Article, so that the number of Articles dealing with the Humanity of Christ is reduced to six. The Mystery of the Blessed Trinity is contained in one Article, while an Article is added, in separating the Resurrection from the Glorification. In this way six Articles are also devoted to the Divinity.[2]

III.

St. Thomas, in proposing certain difficulties, in connexion with the divisions of the Creed, makes several interesting comments on certain truths which are not expressly mentioned in it.

[1] Cf. *Sum. Theol.* ibid.
[2] Ibid.

Some of these truths refer to God's Providence, His Omnipotence, and the worship which is due to Him.[1] Belief in the Omniscience and Providence of God, he tells us, is implied in the Article, "I believe in God the Father Almighty." An omnipotent and supremely intelligent Being must be a universal Provisor, and must necessarily know all things; otherwise, He could not exercise His Power. Again, Christ's Sacramental Presence in the Blessed Eucharist, in so far as it is miraculous and effected by the words of Consecration, is implied in the Article on God's Omnipotence; while the Eucharistic Mystery, as a Sacrament or a sacramental act, is contained in the Article which deals with God the Author of grace.

The Mystery of the Blessed Trinity, St. Thomas also tells us, may be expressed in one Article, for the three Divine Persons contain one Nature, and being relatively opposed, the notion of one Person contains and suggests that of another to which it is related. Still, there is a special difficulty in accepting the doctrine of the Procession of the Son, and that of the Holy Ghost. Arius denied the Consubstantiality of the Son, and Macedonius that of the Holy Ghost. The Mystery of the Trinity is, in consequence, more correctly expressed in different Articles. In like manner the Conception, Nativity, Resurrection, and Life Eternal, although referring

[1] Ibid. ad 1.

to the same Person, yet each Mystery has difficulties peculiar to itself. They are, therefore, more suitably expressed in distinct Articles.[1]

Again, on account of the visible mission of the Son and that of the Holy Ghost in the sanctification of men, the number of Articles which refer to the Son and to the Holy Ghost exceeds the number which refer to the Father. But as the sanctification of souls is attributed to the Son through Wisdom, and to the Holy Ghost through the gift of Charity, the work of Creation is attributed to the Father.[2]

What has been hitherto said refers chiefly to the Apostles' Creed, although there are two other Creeds which are held sacred, as well from immemorial custom, as by the sanction of ecclesiastical authority; these are the Nicene Creed, and the Creed of St. Athanasius. The Apostles' Creed was delivered by the Apostles to the faithful, not indeed in writing, but orally, so as to be retained on the lips, in the hearts and memory of the faithful.[3] This Creed contains a simple and brief summary of the truths of faith, and presents them to us with the sanction of Church authority. It serves to keep the faithful in mind of the leading truths of faith, and by its profession the faithful are distinguished

[1] *Sum. Theol.* ibid. ad 3.
[2] Ibid. ad 4 et 5.
[3] Cf. Billuart, O.P., De objecto fid. dissert. i. art. vii. Digress. hist.

from unbelievers. Our theology, indeed, is nothing more than a scientific exposition of this Creed. Although the Apostles' Creed contained from the beginning the leading tenets of Catholic faith, additions were made to it by the authority of the Church, when occasion required, or when it was necessary that the faithful should have prominently before them those truths which were questioned by heretics.

The growth and development of the Creed supplies to the student an interesting historical subject for study.[1] In substance the Creed was given by the Apostles, who, as is more commonly thought, arranged in order the truths contained in it. The opinion, that each of the Apostles had a separate Creed, from which the selections were afterwards made, is not probable. Rufinus thus writes: "The Apostles, before departing, framed together a common rule of preaching."[2] It was necessary, however, to make additions soon after the death of the Apostles, as may be gathered from the writings of the Fathers, Cyprian and Cyril of Jerusalem, and also from Origen and Novatian.[3] As regards the later additions, St. Thomas writes: "Each Synod makes provision that the next Synod—if it be necessary on account of heresy—may expound certain truths which the previous Synod

[1] Cf. Batiffol, *Le Symbole des Apôtres*, *Rev. Biblique*, Jan., 1894, p. 30; Harnack, *Das Apostoliche Glaubensbekenntnis*, Berlin, 1892.
[2] *Comment. in Symbol. Apost.* ap. Migne, *P.L.*, XXI. 337.
[3] Cf. Scaff, *The Creeds of Christendom*, vol. ii. pp. 20, 25 seqq.

did not explain; hence it belongs to the Supreme Pontiff, by whose authority the Synod is assembled, and by whose sanction it is confirmed, to publish the Symbol of Faith." [1]

The Nicene-Constantinopolitine Creed is an exposition of the Apostles' Creed, and contains additional and explicit reference to the Divinity of Our Lord, and to the Procession and the Divinity of the Holy Ghost. These doctrines were added to the Creed on account of the errors of Arius, Eunomius, and Macedonius. This Creed was drawn up when the Church was enjoying comparative peace, and hence it is publicly sung in the churches. The Apostles' Creed was given in secret and in the days of persecution. It is recited, therefore, in secret in church at Prime and Compline. In referring to the Athanasian Creed, the Angelic Doctor writes: "St. Athanasius did not draw up a confession of faith in the form of a Symbol, but rather gave an exposition of a certain doctrine, and as this exposition of doctrine contains all the chief points of faith, it was received by the Roman Pontiff, and has since been regarded as a rule of faith." [2]

Some marked developments of the Creed are contained in the modern Professions of Faith. Among these, we have that of the Council of Trent, which was published by Pius IV, and

[1] *Sum. Theol.* ibid. ad 3.
[2] Ibid. IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 10. ad 2.

contains a summary of the doctrines defined by that Council.[1] A further addition was afterwards made which contained doctrine defined by the Vatican Council. In a Decree of the Sacred Congregation of the Council we find the following words: "I also unhesitatingly accept and profess those truths which are delivered, defined, and declared, by the Vatican Council, especially those that refer to the Primacy, and Infallible Teaching Authority of the Roman Pontiff."[2] Again, we have the Professions of Faith prescribed by Urban VIII and Benedict XIV for the Easterns, in which express reference is made to the teaching of the Councils of the Church up to the time of the Council of Trent.[3] We have also the Profession of Faith prescribed for the Greeks by Gregory XIII,[4] containing special reference to the *Filioque*, unleavened bread, Purgatory, the souls of the dead, and the Primacy of the Holy See. Lastly, we have the Profession of Faith prescribed by Pius X, which is specially directed against Modernism.

IV.

As matters dealing with faith may be revealed in terms which contain revealed truth either

[1] Const. *Injunctum Nobis*, 18 Nov., 1564.
[2] Decret., 20th Jan., 1877.
[3] Constit. 79 *Nuper ad nos*.
[4] Constit. 51, *Sanctissimus Dominus Noster*.

expressly, implicitly, or virtually, it may be useful to treat of this aspect of the question in detail, not only that the position of an ordinary Catholic may be understood, but also as a preliminary to the subject-matter of the succeeding chapter.

A truth may be revealed formally or virtually. It is said to be formally revealed when directly, immediately, and in express, or equivalent terms, it is revealed by God; thus we have the doctrine of Creation formally revealed in the words: "In the beginning God created heaven and earth"; [1] in the words, "the Word was made Flesh," we have the truth of the Incarnation, or the fact that Christ became Man formally revealed, not indeed in express, but in equivalent terms; for the word "flesh" does not expressly, but only equivalently, convey the same meaning as the word "man."

A truth formally revealed, but not in express terms, is said to be implicitly revealed; thus, the assumption of human nature by the Word is implicitly revealed in the words, "the Word was made Flesh." Implicit revelation may occur is several ways. When a proposition is said to be false on the authority of Divine revelation, its contradictory is formally, though only implicitly, revealed. Concepts and terms that are related imply each other. When, therefore, the existence

[1] Gen. i. 1.

of the Divine Sonship was revealed in the words of the Psalm, "Thou art My Son, this day have I begotten Thee," [1] the existence of the Father was implicitly revealed in the same words. In the revelation of the whole, the essential parts, whether physical, metaphysical or logical, are implicitly revealed. Thus in the proposition, "Christ became Man," the assumption by the Word of a human soul and body, and therefore the existence of animality and rationality in Christ, are implicitly revealed. In the proposition, "All men will rise again at the Last Day," we have revealed to us, implicitly, the Resurrection of each individual, and, therefore, that St. Peter will rise again on the Last Day. If two propositions are explicitly revealed, and a conclusion drawn from them, the conclusion is formally revealed, though only implicitly; thus as it is revealed that the Seven Sacraments produce grace, and that the Eucharist is a Sacrament, the conclusion which follows, namely, that the Eucharist also produces grace, is formally, though only implicitly revealed.

All truths formally revealed, whether in express or in implied terms, belong to the material object of Divine faith. If they are explicitly revealed, they pertain to faith, not merely in themselves (*quoad se*), but also in relation to the believer (*quoad nos*).

[1] Ps. ii. 7.

This fact hardly requires proof, since all revealed truth belongs to the material object of Divine faith, and, as such, is to be accepted by the believer when he realizes that it is delivered to him on the direct and clear testimony of God. But if a truth is not expressly revealed, but only implied, it also—at least when it is considered objectively or *quoad se*—belongs to the material object of faith.[1] In such cases the truth is proposed by God in equivalent, if not in express terms, and God in thus speaking to man reveals Himself in a way adapted to human nature ; for according to the laws of thought and their expression, a truth is formally and really revealed when the terms equivalently imply what would otherwise be contained in express testimony ; thus, according to the ordinary laws of dialectics, a universal proposition is equivalent to all the particular propositions contained in it, and *vice versa*.[2]

If the identity existing between a truth contained in a revealed proposition and its equivalent, is not recognized by the believer, or if the connexion, though objective, is not evident, a person is not bound to accept as part of the material object of faith a truth which is thus implicitly revealed. If, however, the Church define the truth as a part of revelation, then the believer is bound to accept it under pain of heresy. For

[1] Cf. Tanquerey, *De objecto fid.* c. i. 35. [2] Ibid.

this reason the faithful are obliged to accept the definitions of the Church on Papal Infallibility, although, their want of knowledge of the objective relation existing between it and the truth or truths in which it is contained, was sufficient to excuse them from explicitly accepting the doctrine of Papal Infallibility before it was defined by the Church.

When it is recognized that a truth is contained in another truth explicitly revealed it is the duty of the believer to accept the former as a portion of revealed truth. This is the common opinion, although Ripalda and others dissent from it. But, as already pointed out, a proposition explicitly revealed is in itself a sufficient sign of the truth which it implicitly contains, and when the believer recognizes the latter, he should accept it on faith, since God, in this matter acts in a way suited to human nature, and wishes His revelation to be accepted according to the ordinary laws of thought, and their expression.[1]

In the revelation of any composite whole, the essential parts, whether physical, metaphysical, or logical, are revealed, and so pertain to the material object of faith. This does not apply to other parts which are non-essential. If a truth is not essentially connected with a revealed truth its revelation is not apparent

[1] Cf. De Lugo, *De Virtute Fidei*, disp. 1. n. 259; Suarez, *De Fide*, disp. 3, sect. 11, no. 5.

either from the revelation of the truth revealed or from the end which God has in view in revealing it, or from the nature of the matter in question. In the first place, the revelation of a truth accidentally connected with another truth explicitly revealed is not evident from the revelation of the truth which is expressly revealed, because, as a matter of fact, God has revealed, separately and independently, truths connected in this way with other truths expressly revealed. Again, it is not evident from the end which God has in view in revealing the truth expressly revealed, since God may have a reason for revealing an essential, without revealing a property connected with it; as, for example, God might reveal the Humanity of Christ without intending to reveal the existence of a property which is not essential to it. Lastly, the nature of thought and its expression do not demand that a concept necessarily contains another when that other is not essential to it.[1]

Catholics are bound to explicit belief in some truths, such as the Incarnation and the Trinity, which are necessary as a means of salvation. They are obliged under precept to explicit belief in other truths. They are not bound, however, even by precept, to make an explicit act of faith in all the truths of revelation. Implicit faith in a certain number of truths suffices, for the faithful

[1] Cf. *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. II. arts. 5, 6, 7.

are safeguarded by the motive of faith, which is the authority of God in revelation, while at the same time they are prepared to follow the teaching of the Church as their guide to all truth. Moreover, by the very fact of accepting the Church's authority, they can be said, in a certain way, to have implicit faith in all revealed truth; and although forbidden to deny any revealed truth taught by the Church, they are not bound to make a positive and explicit act of faith in all Catholic truth. Hence they are not bound to know explicitly all the truths of faith. And yet the motive of faith, together with the authority of the Church, so safeguards them, and the gifts of the Holy Ghost so enlighten them, that even the most illiterate are quick to detect error in connexion with the most subtle points of Catholic doctrine.

St. Thomas explains why the precept of faith does not bind to an explicit act of faith in all the truths of revelation, or to the acceptance, in detail, of all the propositions of faith—even though one is bound by precept to explicit faith in the fundamental truths contained in the Creed.[1] "The determination of an act of any virtue," he writes, "to those things which . . . pertain secondarily to the proper and essential object of the virtue, is not necessarily of precept, unless for a certain time or place." [2]

[1] Ibid. art. 5. [2] Ibid.

The explicit act of faith which Catholics are obliged to make in the Articles of Faith differs from that which is generally known as belief in the fundamentals. We elsewhere refer in this treatise to the attempt made by some non-Catholics to secure unity of belief among Christians by binding them to faith in what is known as the fundamentals.[1] The theory would leave Christians free to accept or reject at pleasure the non-fundamentals. But one is not free to accept or reject at pleasure what is true, even though it may be styled a non-fundamental. A Catholic considers himself bound to accept all the truths of faith, even though knowledge of all, and therefore explicit faith in all, is not of precept. A knowledge of the principal truths of religion is of precept, though, in common with all precepts, it does not bind unless where the fulfilment of the precept is possible. But explicit belief in the Redemption is not only of precept; it is also a necessary means of salvation; "for there is no other name under heaven given to men, whereby we must be saved,"[2] but that of Jesus Christ.[3] Explicit faith in the Incarnation supposes explicit faith in the Trinity, because, as St. Thomas tells us, in the Mystery of the Incarnation we have the taking up of human flesh by the Son of God, the renovation of the world by the grace

[1] Cf. Chap. ix. pp. 324. 325.
[2] Acts iv. 12.
[3] Conf. Joan. xvii. 3.

of the Holy Spirit, and also the miraculous Conception by the Holy Ghost.[1] Again, our Lord said: "Going, therefore, teach all nations; baptizing them in the name of the Father, and of the Son, and of the Holy Ghost."[2] These truths are correctly styled fundamentals, since they are the foundation of our faith; but the other facts of revelation are also true. They were revealed by God, and so demand the assent of faith, and are not matters of opinion or doubt, much less are they open to denial.

Explicit faith in the Mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation is necessary for all, but only under the Law of Grace, or in the New Dispensation; whereas belief in the Existence of God and His Providence was "necessary at all times even for all."[3] But, as already suggested, the Pastors of the Church are bound, in the matter of explicit faith in revealed truth, to a fuller knowledge of doctrine than the ordinary faithful, and therefore St. Thomas writes: "As the superior angels, who enlighten the inferior, have a fuller knowledge of Divine things than the inferior, so superiors among men, to whom it belongs to instruct others, are bound to a fuller knowledge of the things which are of faith and to a more explicit belief in them."[4]

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. II. art. 8.
[2] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[3] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. II. art. 8 ad 1.
[4] Ibid. art. 6.

V.

So far there has been question of truths formally revealed, either explicitly or implicitly, by God. But besides these there are other truths which are only virtually revealed. When these truths are formally expressed they are known as Theological Conclusions. A Theological Conclusion, in the strict sense, is a proposition deduced from two premises, one only of which is revealed, while the other is known by the light of natural reason. A Theological Conclusion is not, therefore, a mere exposition of a revealed truth or proposition. It is arrived at by deduction. We deduce by reasoning a Theological Conclusion from the following propositions, of which one only is revealed: God will reward the good and punish the wicked. But He cannot do so unless man has free-will; therefore, man has free-will. The freedom of the will, considered in this way, is a Theological Conclusion, for it is virtually contained in the revealed truth, "God will reward the good and punish the wicked." If a proposition is drawn from a revealed truth in which it is implicitly contained, but without the use of the deductive syllogism, or if it is drawn from two revealed truths the conclusion in either case is not a Theological Conclusion in the ordinary accepted sense. It is part of the material object of faith; for in a Theological

Conclusion one of the premises is known only by the light of natural reason. If the two premises are revealed, the conclusion drawn from them, though formally a Theological Conclusion, is not so materially. Being implied in the revealed premises the conclusion itself is really revealed, and as such belongs to the material object of faith.[1]

A Conclusion, which is Theological in the strict sense, may be otherwise revealed, and if so, it is as such a part of the material object of faith. It is possible, too, that a truth may be at the same time philosophically certain, a Theological Conclusion, and a revealed truth. This is true of human liberty, which is known, not only on the testimony of God, and by virtual revelation, but also by demonstration from the facts of experience.[2]

According to a few theologians, and among them Melchior Canus, a Theological Conclusion is—even independent of the authority of the Church—a part of the material object of faith. One of the reasons assigned is that it is sufficiently revealed in the revealed premise in which it is virtually contained, and should therefore be accepted on the authority of God. But it may be said in reply that it is not sufficiently revealed in the revealed premise to make it a matter of faith, and, judging the facts according

[1] Ibid. [2] Cf. De Groot, O.P., *Sum. Apol.* Q. IX. art. 2.

to the ordinary laws of thought, God does not really reveal a Theological Conclusion when He reveals the truth in which it is virtually contained. Besides He has actually revealed truths which are otherwise Theological Conclusions, thus showing that He does not intend us to accept a Theological Conclusion as a part of the material object of faith.

Other Theologians[1] think that a Theological Conclusion, although not of faith before a definition of the Church, becomes so when it is defined by the Church. The reason they assign is that God Himself testifies to what the Church teaches, inasmuch as Christ promised to be with His Church and to teach her all things. He also promised to send the Holy Ghost to suggest to her all truth.

It is true, indeed, that Christ made these promises, and in their fulfilment the Church is infallible in matters dealing with faith and morals ; but in order to be practical and efficacious her infallibility must not be confined to the mere material object of faith, and to matters dealing directly with morals. She could not protect the Deposit of Faith, if her power does not extend further, and so, when she defends by her authority and defines a Theological Conclusion, she defends what is certainly true, but not what is necessarily of faith. Although

[1] Cf. De Lugo, S.J., De Fid. disp. 3.

the Church is infallible, therefore, in defining a Theological Conclusion it does not follow that her teaching on such a truth is doctrinal and of faith.

Truths which are of faith, are so, because they were formally revealed by God. It is the Church's office to teach, and if she teaches that a truth is of faith, it is so because it has already been the object of Divine faith. The assistance promised by Christ to the Church does not make her the subject of inspiration, nor of Divine revelation. By the assistance of the Holy Ghost she may not only define a revealed truth, but she may also teach truths which are not of faith, and which are merely connected with revealed truth. If the truth is not really revealed, it is not the object of Catholic faith after the Church's definition, if it is not the object of Divine faith before it. The Church, as such, cannot be the recipient of a new revelation. And if, by her defence of the truth of a proposition, an addition is thereby made to the material object of faith the Church would become, in consequence, not merely the exponent of supernatural truth, but the source of revealed doctrine as well. This cannot be so, and yet since the Church is the infallible interpreter of revealed truth she is also infallible in teaching Theological Conclusions; otherwise her infallible authority would be unduly circumscribed, and her power to protect the Deposit of Faith unavailing; since she could logically be forced to error in doctrine, if she

should err in teaching things closely connected with doctrine. Theological Conclusions, therefore, which receive the Church's sanction become an object of Ecclesiastical faith, although they cannot be the object of Divine and Catholic faith.

A person is not bound, therefore, under pain of heresy to believe in a Theological Conclusion which is simply a part of the Church's teaching, and which is not revealed, either explicitly or implicitly by God. Such a person is, however, not only temerarious, but is also proximately and presumably a heretic ; for the truth, thus denied, mediately pertains to the Deposit of Faith, since the object of Ecclesiastical faith can be said to be mediately Divine.

VI.

The truths contained in the Deposit of Faith are revealed, not for the sake of any particular person, but for the whole Church. But God has revealed truths which are intended to benefit certain individuals, and which are not revealed, at least directly, for the benefit of the Universal Church. Such revelations do not belong to the Deposit of Divine and Catholic Faith. But if a revelation is made in this way by God, and is evidently credible, either to the person to whom it is made, or to the person on whose account it

is made, or to other persons who are convinced of its truth from motives of credibility, or from reasons sufficiently strong to entail certainty, then such persons are bound to receive on Divine faith the revelation thus made.

The Council of Trent teaches that one can be certain of his election to glory if he know it from private revelation.[1] Again, we know from Sacred Scripture that several persons, such as Noe, Abraham, and Sarah, believed in certain truths, although their knowledge of them depended on private revelation. They were not, however, free to reject the truths thus made known to them on the authority of God. Besides, in their case the conditions requisite for an act of Divine faith were present.

It is seldom that the conditions requisite for an act of faith in truths thus revealed can be verified, and therefore the alleged revelation should be examined in the light of the teaching of the Church, or of theologians. It should also be tested by the canons of morality, that all who are interested may know whether it promotes good or prevents evil, or if it have reference to solid and not to frivolous matter. Inquiry should also be made touching the character of the person to whom the revelations are supposed to be made. To be trustworthy in this matter a person should be mentally sound, and free from

[1] Sess. VI. c. xii.

delusions and hysteria, as well as upright, abstemious, and of moral life.

The approbation by the Church of certain revelations, such as those granted to St. Catherine of Sienna, St. Theresa, and St. Bridget, does not bind the faithful to accept the revelations on Catholic faith. The Church's approbation of a private revelation merely implies the permission to publish it for the use and benefit of the faithful. The faithful, on their part, are bound to respect the revelation as credible, but on human faith, arising from ecclesiastical authority, and on account of the Church's approbation. If, therefore, the Church approve of any devotion, such as that of the Sacred Heart, she does so independently of private revelation. If she establish or sanction any feast connected with some apparition, her authority extends to the *cultus* or devotion, and not to the miraculous appearance. If God manifest His Will by such a miraculous appearance, the Church, in obeying His Will, recognizes the historical accuracy of the miracle and the Divine Intention thus manifested.

VII.

The Church, in exercising her infallible authority, as teacher of mankind, does so as the guardian and exponent of that doctrine alone which was entrusted to her by Christ and His

Apostles. Her scope and aim is to bring the body of truth, whether in Sacred Scripture or in Divine and Apostolic Tradition, within the sphere of Catholic faith. This she does, as the Vatican Council teaches, either by a solemn or definitive judgment, or by her ordinary and universal teaching authority.[1]

If her teaching is solemn and definitive, it may come from the Pope, as Head of the Church and speaking *ex cathedra*, as he did in defining the dogma of the Immaculate Conception; or it may be a dogmatic definition of an Œcumenical Council, in which the Church teaches, either in the form of Canons in which heretical teaching is condemned and anathematized, or in the form of Chapters in which she positively explains Divine and Catholic truth; or it may be the decisions or definitions of local Councils which are approved of in a solemn way by the Roman Pontiff, as were the definitions of the Second Council of Orange against the Semi-Pelagians—although the Council itself was not Œcumenical and was not therefore, as such, infallible—or it may, in fine, be the Creeds and Professions of faith approved of by the Church.

The Church exercises her ordinary teaching authority in her doctrinal practices and in her liturgy. We have instances of the exercise of this authority in the administration of the

[1] Sess. iii. c. 3.

Sacraments and in the institution of a Feast, or of a universal *cultus* in honour of certain truths of faith. For this reason a person is bound under pain of heresy to accept the doctrine of the existence of Guardian Angels, since the Church has instituted a Feast in their honour, and since there is a universal *cultus* of the faithful towards them. Again, the unanimous teaching of the Fathers, Bishops, and Theologians of the Church, as witnesses of revealed truth, and in so far as they express the ordinary teaching of the Church, is sufficient to bind the faithful to accept their teaching under pain of heresy. For this reason some hold that the doctrine of the Assumption of Our Blessed Lady is even of Catholic Faith. If the Doctors of the Church are unanimous in teaching it, there can be little doubt as to the truth of this opinion, especially as it is associated with a Feast in Our Lady's honour.

The Church also exercises her ordinary teaching authority in her implied definitions, when she proposes to us the Sacred Scripture and Divine and Apostolic Tradition as the Depositaries of the Word of God. In so doing she testifies to all the revealed doctrine contained in them, so that the faithful are bound to accept on faith all the truths which are manifestly contained in Sacred Scripture and in Divine and Apostolic Tradition. When the Council of Trent, therefore, sanctioned the ordinary accepted interpretation

of the words of Our Lord to Nicodemus (which occur in the Third Chapter of St. John's Gospel), and taught that the words, "Unless a man be born again of water," etc., refer to ordinary water, and are not to be understood in a metaphorical, but in a literal sense,[1] the Council merely gave explicit testimony to the meaning of the text. The Church, in presenting it to the faithful with the Scriptures, as a part of inspired truth, had already implicitly testified to its literal meaning, and as conveying that meaning the faithful had always accepted it.

In the Chapters and Decrees of a General Council there are, indeed, portions which are introduced either as *obiter dicta* or as arguments, whether theological or philosophical, and which are not matters of faith. In like manner the points discussed in the sessions previous to those in which the doctrinal Decrees and Canons are promulgated, are not as such doctrinal and of faith; for the Fathers of the Council with the Roman Pontiff do not define in such sessions. But in their doctrinal teaching the Fathers of the Council are not restricted to any particular formula, from which it may be known that their definitions are of faith. This leaves room sometimes for discussion as to whether their teaching binds in faith. If the matter is doctrinal, and the

[1] Sess. vii. De Bap. Can. 2.

nature of the teaching is not expressed in some formula, the fact may be gathered from the context.

Generally speaking, those Canons which carry an anathema against those who deny the truths of which they treat, pertain to faith. If, as sometimes happens, they are merely disciplinary, the fact may be gathered from the matter which they contain. Canons to which excommunications are attached generally deal with revealed doctrine, though it sometimes happens that propositions condemned in such Canons may not be heretical, but merely erroneous.

All propositions represent the infallible teaching of the Church, if they are promulgated by the authority of a General Council, or of the Roman Pontiff when speaking *ex cathedra*. This is true, even though they only indirectly pertain to faith. The decision of a Roman Congregation, however, even when promulgated in the name and authority of the Roman Pontiff, is not infallible, if the Pope does not make such teaching his own and in such a way as to make it an *ex cathedra* decision. Nevertheless the decisions of the Congregations should be received with respect, and due submission, inasmuch as these decisions are given after mature thought, and are issued subject to an authority delegated by the Holy See. Prudence, as a rule, will also dictate that we should give

internal assent to these decisions, unless it happen that from some unconsidered circumstance certain doubts may arise. In such cases one can suspend his assent and abide the decision of the Holy See.[1]

[1] Cf. Tanquery, *Synop. Theol. Dog.*, de objecto fid., p. 27.

CHAPTER VII.

Stability of the Material Object of Faith.

I.

Divine revelation began with the human family. Adam, before his fall, was justified through faith and sanctifying grace, although the grace given to him was not merited by Christ. It was a gift of his Creator, given as a token of God's liberality rather than of His mercy. To Adam the primary object and the motive of faith were the same as they are to the Christian, but there is no certainty as to the extent of the material object of faith, in the State of Innocence. Adam's state was such that the material object of faith must have been more circumscribed than it is in the New Law. The perfection of his natural knowledge would, in part, account for this. He had a clearer perception of natural truth than any of his posterity, and therefore, before the Fall, as the Angelic Doctor tells us, "man knew many things connected with the Divine Mysteries, which we cannot know at present unless through faith."[1] Besides, it was not fitting that he should know those truths which are consequent on the Fall. If, as theologians say, the Incarna-

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. V. art. 1.

tion of the Word was revealed to Adam, the Redemption was unknown to him, for his own fall was not revealed to him, and therefore he did not know of Original Sin, its consequences, and its remedies. On this point St. Thomas writes : " There is nothing to prevent the revelation of an effect to a person, without the revelation of its cause. The Mystery of the Incarnation could, therefore, have been revealed to the first man, even without his knowledge of the Fall." [1]

The revelation proper to man's fallen state began with the Patriarchs, and may be divided into Patriarchal, Mosaic, and Evangelic. Patriarchal Revelation extended from Adam, through Noe, Abraham and the other Patriarchs, to Moses. It was, as such, unwritten, and contained, at least, a confused notion of the Redemption, the truths of natural religion, and some others. It also contained precepts and rites necessary for the profession of supernatural religion, and for the preservation of faith in a future Redeemer.[2]

Moses added to the Patriarchal Tradition many precepts, moral, ceremonial and judiciary. Although in the Gospel many precepts peculiar to the Mosaic Law are abrogated, yet the Christian Dispensation contains the fullness of revealed truth, and the perfection of Divine revelation. This is peculiarly fitting, since the

[1] Ibid. P. III. Q. I. art. 3. ad 5.
[2] Bainvel, *De Magisterio vivo et Traditione*, p. 138, Paris, 1905.

Gospel was given by Him Who is the Author of all Truth, and Who was born, and Who came into the world, "to give testimony of the truth."[1] "The ultimate consummation of grace was made by Christ," says St. Thomas,[2] "so that His time is said to be the time of plenitude";[3] and the Apostle, St. Paul, comparing the Christian's knowledge of Divine truth with that of the generations which preceded Christ, thus writes: "As you reading may understand my knowledge in the mystery of Christ, which in other generations was not known to the sons of men, as it is now revealed to His holy Apostles and Prophets in the Spirit."[4] As the influence of Judaism was in great measure local, and did not extend beyond the confines of the Jewish nation, and as the Gospel teaching was to extend to the entire world, the same Apostle tells us that the Gentiles "should be fellow-heirs, and of the same body, and co-partners of his promise in Christ Jesus by the Gospel."[5]

II.

An increase in the material object of faith may be either absolute or relative. The absolute increase is called by theologians an increase

[1] John xviii. 37.
[2] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 7 ad 4.
[3] Gal. iv. 4.
[4] Eph. iii. 4, 5.
[5] Eph. iii. 6.

simpliciter dictum, and supposes the revelation of a truth hitherto unrevealed. A relative increase in the material object of faith does not require additional revelation. It merely supposes an explicit exposition of a truth already implicitly revealed in another truth in which it is contained. This explicit exposition represents a development, but not an objective increase in doctrine, and is what theologians call an increase *secundum quid*. By this development, an object which has belonged to Divine faith in itself (*quoad se*) becomes Catholic, or of faith, relative to the believer (*quoad nos*); and hence an absolute increase in the material object of faith is objective and accretive, whereas a relative increase in the same object is subjective and non-accretive. Stability in the material object of faith is, therefore, compatible with a relative, but not with an absolute, increase in matters of faith. Moreover, the relative increase applies to the Gospel period alone, in which development in doctrine is not objective nor accretive. The stability of doctrine, therefore, of which we speak, did not exist from Adam until the coming of Christ, for during that time revelation was progressive. Since Christ's time, revelation is not progressive, although doctrine is. Christian revelation harmonizes with Patriarchal and Mosaic, although it is not a mere development from it. If it were really contained in Mosaic revelation, the increase in the material object

of faith made by Christ and the Apostles would not be objective and accretive. It would have been subjective and relative, and so the content of Mosaic truth would have remained identical with the Evangelical content.

St. Thomas tells us that all revealed truth is contained substantially in two general truths. These truths are the Existence of God and His Providence. All supernatural truth is connected with one or other of these two truths. But, from the knowledge of these two general truths man could not acquire a knowledge of the Mysteries connected with the Divine Nature and with God's Providence in dealing with man; hence, of the particular truths contained in these two general truths there had been progressive revelation from the beginning until the time of Christ. This applies even to truths so necessary for Christian faith as the Mysteries of the Trinity and Incarnation. Yet these truths were from the beginning sufficiently revealed for at least implicit faith in them on the part of the faithful. God wished, however, to prepare mankind gradually for the explicit reception of these Sacred Mysteries, and so He reserved to Himself, in person, the work of revealing clearly those Mysteries in which explicit faith is so necessary under the New Law. St. Thomas, therefore, in treating of the objective increase in Divine revelation, thus writes: "Before the law Abraham was taught, prophetically,

concerning those things which pertain to faith in the Deity. . . . Under the law, however, prophetic revelation concerning faith in the Deity was given more fully than before, for it was then necessary to give instruction, not merely to particular persons, or to certain families, but to a whole people. . . . But afterwards, in the time of grace, the Mystery of the Trinity was revealed by the Son of God Himself." [1]

The words of the Angelic Doctor above quoted do not militate against the view elsewhere expressed by him, in which he shows that certain persons possessed, even before Christ's coming, explicit faith in the Mysteries of the Incarnation and Trinity. This knowledge was exceptional and was possessed by persons like the prophet Isaiah—whose prophecies were so detailed concerning the Incarnation—and the authors of Wisdom and Proverbs, who refer so frequently to the Divine Wisdom, and to the Spirit of God. This knowledge St. Thomas would grant, not merely to the prophets and elders of Israel, but also to some of the Gentiles, as, for instance, to Job,[2] and even to the sibyls.[3]

If Divine revelation was progressive from Adam until the Christian era, it was especially so in regard to those truths which are only secondary when compared to the Mysteries of the Trinity

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. CLXXIV. art. 6.
[2] Ibid. Q. II. art. 7.
[3] Ibid. Q. II. art. 7 ad 3.

and Incarnation. Many of the truths delivered by Christ were not formally implied in truths already revealed, as, for instance, the validity of Baptism when conferred by heretics, or the matter and form in Confirmation. Some Christian truths were, however, revealed before the time of Christ and even explicitly, as, for instance, the Virginity of Our Blessed Lady, in the words of Isaiah: "Behold a virgin shall conceive," etc. [1] But it remained for Christ and His Apostles to put their seal upon the truths of revelation for all time. The Deposit of Divine Truth was therefore completed by Christ and His Apostles, so that all that is needed for an explicit act of faith in a truth which may be for a time under discussion is a declaration, on the part of infallible authority, that such a truth is contained in the Deposit of Faith. A new revelation is not required to elicit even an explicit act of faith in a truth implicitly delivered by the Apostles. The authority of the Church is all that is needed in order that one may know that such a truth is part of the material object of faith. Many non-Catholics err, therefore, when they assert that Catholics change their faith when a doctrine is thus defined. Catholics, on the contrary, hold that the truths thus defined were delivered by Christ and His Apostles to the Church, so that the Church, in her definitions

[1] Isaiah vii. 14.

and as the mouthpiece of the Holy Ghost, merely declares that the truths which she defines were thus delivered. She is not the recipient of new revelation; she only testifies to its deliverance; and as individual Catholics cannot know what the revealed truths are, they recognize the need of an Infallible Church as a guide in matters of faith. Even theologians have expressed doubts on some of the truths of faith before they were defined. This fact alone points to the need of an Infallible Witness in matters of faith.

Although the deliverance of the full Deposit of revealed truth excludes all possible accretion to Catholic faith, it does not exclude the possibility of private revelation. As already suggested, such revelation is not doctrinal and Catholic, nor is it committed directly to the Church. As to the use which the Church may make of such revelation, we quote the following words from Bainvel:

"They" [post-Apostolic revelations], he writes, "can be useful to the Church, and sometimes have been, as in the *cultus* of the Blessed Eucharist, of the Sacred Heart of Jesus, and, as it would seem, of St. Joseph. Such revelations contain nothing which is doctrinally opposed to the teaching of the Church. If they contain anything which is outside the doctrine of the Church, the Church does not make such doctrine her own. If what is revealed is already in the Deposit, or connected with the Deposit, but is

clearer and more explicit than the Deposit itself, it may lead to, and direct, inquiry, but not in such a way that the decisions of the Church's authoritative teaching, whether doctrinal or disciplinary, rest upon, or are supported by, such a revelation." [1]

III.

The opinion of those who affirm that there has been an objective accretion in matters of faith, or that there is still room for absolute increase in the material object of faith, is opposed to the authority of Sacred Scripture, and has justly been condemned by the Church as heretical.

Heretics have ventured, at different times and places, to oppose the teaching of the Church in this matter. But, while unanimous in professing their belief in the changeable character of dogmatic truth, they do not agree as to the nature of the doctrinal change, or even as to its cause. Some believe in the possibility of a new revelation, and in its realization, in a way altogether independent of the Church. Others advocate a change even in the constitution of the Church herself. Amongst those who have advocated this change are the Anabaptists, the followers of Swedenborg and Edward Irving, and some who, like the Manichaeans and false mystics of old, expect a new

[1] Bainvel, op. cit. p. 128.

revelation of the Spirit.[1] This class of heretics generally thinks that the Dispensation proper to the Father, and which belonged to the Old Testament, has passed away; that the Dispensation of the Son is passing, or, according to some, has passed away, in order to give place to that of the Holy Ghost, which is to last until the end. The author of the *Eternal Gospel*, while proclaiming the advent of a more spiritual Church, admitted that the Church of Peter, when spiritualized and perfected, must remain for ever.[2]

Other heretics say that the Church herself has corrupted the truths of revelation. Protestants generally assert this, and deny that the Church is indefectible. They also deny her infallibility. It was the common view of the pseudo-Reformers of the sixteenth century that the Catholic Church had proved herself untrustworthy; and as there was no other visible Church to which to appeal they sought refuge, not in a visible, but in an invisible Church. They thus broke with Traditional Christianity; and, since their time, the principles which they advocated have been pushed to their ultimate conclusions. According to many modern Liberal Protestants and Rationalists, religion has so developed in this enlightened

1 Cf. De Groot, O.P., *Sum. Apol.* p. 279.
2 Cf. Denifle, O.P., *Archiv. des Mittelalters.* B. 1.50 et seqq. ap. De Groot, p. 279.

age, that authority should yield to the religion of the Spirit from which the material of religion should in great measure be drawn. Auguste Sabatier advocates autonomy in religion.[1] Adolph Harnack considers miracles, the Sacraments and other truths to be false accretions to the true doctrine of Christ. They have no historic connexion, he thinks, with the pure, unadulterated teaching of Our Lord. It is the duty of the critic, therefore, to find out what the religion of Christ was. Loisy's views on evolution in the Christian religion imply a change in dogma, though he would not call the change a corruption. Catholicism, according to him, is Christian, but not immediately from Christ. Other Modernists advocate evolution or change in doctrine within the Church herself, but in a manner subversive of the very essentials of Christianity. Their explanation of objective change in doctrine supposes an unorthodox view of the material object of faith itself. Revelation is, to them, the sum-total of the subjective conceptions or religious emotions, which must change according to the psychological or religious conditions of the believer. Doctrine, according to their views —since it is the record of varied religious experiences—must of necessity be subject to change.

[1] Cf. *Les Religions d'Autorite et la Religion de l'Esprit.*

IV.

The Catholic Church makes her own position clear when there is question of revealed truth and its development. She teaches explicitly that there has been no change nor can there be a change in the Deposit of Truth entrusted to her care. The Vatican Council teaches that the Holy Ghost was not promised to the successors of St. Peter in such a way that they might, by aid of revelation, make known a new doctrine; but that, by His assistance, the revealed truth, already given to the Apostles, might be sacredly guarded and faithfully explained.[1] Revealed truth, therefore, though it may be explained by competent authority, and so made more intelligible to the believer, is itself unchangeable; so that Pius X has justly condemned those who say that the revelation, which constitutes the object of Catholic faith, was not completed with the Apostles.[2]

Sacred Scripture supplies us with ample proof of the unchangeable character of Christian doctrine. St. Paul, in his Epistle to the Hebrews, thus writes: "But now He (Christ) hath obtained a better ministry, by how much also He is a mediator of a better testament, which is established on better promises. . . . Now, in saying a new, he hath made the former old. And that which decayeth and groweth old is near its

[1] Const. de fid. Cathol. Sess. iii. c. 4. [2] Dec. *Lamentabili*, prop. 21.

end."[1] In these words the Apostle excludes the possibility of a change in the New Dispensation, whereas the Old was preparatory, imperfect, and to be supplanted or supplemented by the Gospel of Our Lord. This Gospel, as the completion of the Old, is perfect and unchangeable. The Apostle emphasizes this truth even more fully in the same Epistle, when he writes: "But now He (Christ) promiseth saying: 'Yet once more, and I will move not only the earth but heaven also'; and that He saith: 'yet once more,' He signifieth the translation of the moveable things as made, that those things may remain which are immoveable; therefore, receiving an immoveable kingdom, we have grace; whereby let us serve God, with fear and reverence."[2] In these words, the Apostle teaches the stability of the Christian Gospel, and implies the impossibility of a new doctrine or revelation other than that which is from Christ, or which is Apostolic. He writes, therefore, to the Galatians: "Though we, or an angel from Heaven, preach a Gospel to you besides that which we have preached to you let him be anathema."[3] He even goes so far as to emphasize the necessity of adhering to the words in which the Divine Deposit was delivered, and to the unchangeable character of the formulæ of doctrine. Writing to Timothy he says: "O Timothy,

[1] Heb. viii. 6–13.
[2] Heb. xii. 26–28.
[3] Gal. i. 8.

keep that which is committed to thy trust, avoiding the profane novelties of words, and oppositions of knowledge falsely so called";[1] and again: "Hold the form of sound words which thou hast heard of me in faith, and in the love which is in Christ Jesus."[2] The Apostle, therefore, is not only tenacious of the truth delivered once for all, but even of the words in which it is expressed; moreover, he inveighs against any attempt to set up a subjective criterion as the rule of faith. Nothing subjective, according to him, can represent the content of revelation, or the object of Divine faith. He thus writes to the Romans: "How shall they believe Him of whom they have not heard? and how shall they believe without a preacher? and how shall they preach unless they be sent? But all do not obey this Gospel; for Isaias saith, 'Lord, who hath believed our report?' Faith then cometh by hearing, and hearing by the word of Christ."[3] Faith is therefore based on the teaching of Christ, and is received by hearing. It is unchangeable, and, above all, in relation to man it is objective in its origin, and not subjective.

St. Paul considered the doctrine delivered by himself and his fellow-Apostles as complete and therefore final. It alone should guide men in what they are to believe. Even the authority of

[1] 1 Tim. vi. 20. [2] 2 Tim. i. 13. [3] Rom. x. 14-17.

an angel is not enough to supplant the teaching of the Apostles; and faith is not to be accepted or rejected according to the tastes of individuals, who may think that they have a mission, not only to teach those who are outside the Church, but even the Church herself.

The credibility of revealed doctrine appeals to all who, by a proper and orthodox use of reason, seek for truth. The will is not coerced in the assent to the truths of revelation; and since these truths are not intrinsically evident, the assent to faith implies an act of obedience. But those who seek to change the Gospel, or who question its traditional and historic value, or who seek autonomy in religion, cannot be said to obey the Gospel. "All do not obey the Gospel," says St. Paul. The Apostle suggests how both reason and will should harmonize with authority. "For the weapons of our warfare," he tells us, "are not carnal, but mighty to God unto the pulling down of fortifications, destroying counsels, and every height that exalteth itself against the knowledge of God, and bringing into captivity every understanding unto the obedience of Christ."[1] It is by obedience to authority, and, consequently, by submission of the will and understanding to the truths of revelation, that the duties of man towards his Creator are to be adjusted.

[1] 2 Cor. x. 4, 5.

St. Vincent of Lerins, in treating of the matter now under consideration, refers in the following terms to the origin of supernatural truth and Divine faith. "What is the Deposit?" he asks. "It is that which you must believe in, not that which has been invented by you; what you have received, not that which you have thought out for yourself. It is a matter, not of natural temperament, but of doctrine, not of private usurpation, but of public tradition. A thing brought to you; not produced by you." [1] This teaching of St. Vincent is so much to the point that we are reminded by it that what are recognized by some as advanced views on faith and religion are not in reality new. They merely point to a revival, under a new form, of very old and erroneous opinions.

The teaching of St. Paul is in complete accordance with that of Our Lord Himself regarding the origin, permanency and immutability of the truths entrusted by Him to the Apostles. In His farewell discourse to His Apostles at the Last Supper Christ said: "I have yet many things to say to you; but you cannot bear them now. But, when the Spirit of Truth is come, He will teach you all truth. For He shall not speak of Himself; but what things soever He shall hear He shall speak; and the things that are to come He shall show you." [2] The Apostles

[1] St. Vincent of Lerins, *Commonit.*, c. 22.
[2] John xvi. 12, 13.

received from Our Lord Himself, and from the Holy Spirit, the full Deposit of Sacred Truth. It was fitting that the Holy Ghost should complete the work. He proceeds from the Son, and is called the Spirit of Truth; and with His gifts He teaches men faith and love, and so assimilates them to the principle from which He Himself comes.[1]

The Holy Ghost was therefore sent not only to remind the Apostles of the truths which they had already received, and to enlighten them in matters which they did not understand, but also to reveal to them truths which until then they had been incapable of receiving. It was in reference to this last species of truth that Our Lord said to His Apostles: "I have yet many things to say to you, but you cannot bear them now."[2] The Apostles, then, were not only enlightened, but were also taught, by the Holy Spirit. They are indeed truly spoken of as the Foundation of the Church. St. Paul speaks of the faithful, as built upon the Foundation of the Apostles and Prophets, Jesus Christ Himself being the Chief corner-stone.[3] A change in doctrine would not be consistent with the foundation thus laid, nor with the unity and vitality of that organic body, "formed together, which groweth up into an holy temple in the

[1] Cf. S. Thom. Comment. in c. xvi. Joan. lect. iii.
[2] John xvi. 12.
[3] Eph. ii. 20.

Lord." [1] Moreover, the Apostles are placed side by side with the Prophets, inasmuch as the Apostles completed the work begun by the Prophets. The latter had foretold what the former saw and heard.

V.

As in a living body, so also in the Church, we have growth, but a growth in which the principle of organic unity is safeguarded and reserved. It is erroneous, therefore, to assert that Christian teaching in post-Apostolic times was weak and imperfect; or that having lost the Apostles—her special guides and protectors—the teaching Church was like an infant learning to walk, and "to feel her way, as it were, to the realization of her destiny"; or that truth came by degrees to the "Church's consciousness," or that certain powers, which she received from Christ, were at first "timidly asserted by her." The analogy of organic growth must not be pushed to extremes, for it would then involve a change in the Church's state or condition.

Many truths, no doubt, have been brought to the knowledge of the faithful after a long period of doubt and discussion, yet the teaching Church, having at all times the Holy Ghost to guide and direct her, was able to teach, even in

[1] Ibid. ii. 21.

her infancy, the doctrines entrusted to her. The opposite view would imply a constitutional change in her state, or at least an imperfection inconsistent with the stability and permanency of doctrine, and with the promises of Christ to be with His Church for ever. It is heretical, then, to push the analogy so far as to assert that as men acquire knowledge by degrees so the Church has been from age to age the recipient of continued revelation from the Holy Ghost. Man, it is true, can acquire scientific knowledge by degrees, and it is natural that he should do so, but he cannot acquire, by his own power, the knowledge of supernatural truth. For this knowledge he depends on revelation: God revealed the truths of revelation in due time, and, as we have already seen, He gave it in its fullness to the Apostles.

Pius X has condemned the errors of those who say that Christ did not teach a determinate body of doctrine, applicable to all times and to all men, but that he rather set in motion a certain religious feeling which should adapt itself to certain times and places.[1] This heretical teaching implies a wrong conception of the Church's work, and even of her constitution. The Modernists assert that the Church is only the offspring of the collective consciousness, or of the association of individual consciousnesses,

[1] Decree *Lamentabili*, prop. 59.

which, in virtue of vital permanence, depend on some original believer who, in the case of Catholics, is Christ.[1] The Holy Father condemns this teaching, and with it another phase of Modernism, which is not only opposed to the stability and permanency of doctrine, but which resembles in great measure the erroneous views of those pseudo-mystics and heretics of old, who lived in expectation of that full manifestation of the Holy Spirit which would bring with it the overthrow of the Church instituted by Christ.

"May not Catholicism," says a well-known Modernist writer, "like Judaism, have to die in order that it may live again in a greater and grander form? Has not every organism got its limits of development after which it must decay, and be content to survive in its progeny? Wine skins stretch, but only within measure, for there comes at last a bursting point, when new ones must be provided." [2] This heretical teaching is not entirely modern.

But as from the teaching of Sacred Scripture, and from the doctrine of the Church, we learn that there cannot be any accretion to the truths of faith, nor a change in the constitution of the Church, so from the same sources we know that there cannot be any decrease in the Deposit of Faith. "I have prayed for you," said Our Lord,

[1] Cf. Encycl. *Pascendi*, authorized trans. p. 25.
[2] G. Tyrrell, *A Much-abused Letter*, p. 89. Longmans, 1906.

addressing St. Peter, "that your faith fail not." [1] If any portion of the doctrine of the Church could be lost, or cease to be recognized by the Church, as part of the Deposit of Faith, then the words of Christ to St. Peter should cease to be true, and His promise remain unfulfilled. Peter and the faithful, the Pastor and the flock which he feeds, would cease to believe a particular truth revealed by Christ to His Apostles, and thus, rejecting a portion of revealed truth, would fail in faith.

VI.

Even physical science is governed by immutable laws, and, notwithstanding the alleged findings of so-called scientists, saner thinkers assert that the essences of things are unchangeable, and that a transition from one kind or species to another is not normal, nor can it, according to the present arrangement of Divine Providence, harmonize with recognized physical laws. But, unhappily, the views of the pseudo-scientists on the evolution of species, have been transferred to the domain of faith and religion. Even in St. Thomas' time, the question was discussed, and the saint himself refers, in general terms, to fixity of type and the immutability of species. "There is," he writes, "in each one a natural desire for the perfection of his being which would

[1] Luke xxii. 32.

not be preserved if it were changed into another nature. Things, therefore, which are in a lower order of nature cannot desire that of a higher nature. . . . But in this the imagination may be deceived, since forsooth, because a man desires certain things of a higher order, which are accidental, and therefore attainable without the corruption of the subject, it is inferred that he can desire a higher order of nature, a thing to which he cannot attain, unless he cease to exist." [1]

What is true of the natural order is no less true of the supernatural. And just as a change of nature in creatures, as St. Thomas tells us, implies the corruption of the subject, so wherever there is a departure from principle and type in Christian doctrine, there is no longer orthodox organic growth and development, but rather decay and even the overthrow of the Church and of Christianity itself. Cardinal Newman, in enumerating certain signs of the immutability of doctrine, mentions amongst them the permanency of the same type, the same principles, and the same organization; [2] and Pius IX condemned the teaching of those who consider Divine revelation imperfect, and subject to continued and indefinite change; [3] while Pius X anathematizes those who deny that Christian truth is unchangeable.[4]

[1] *Sum. Theol.* P. I. Q. LXIII. art. 3.
[2] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, p. 171, ed. 1878.
[3] In Syllabo Prop. 5.
[4] Decree *Lamentabili*, prop. 58.

The stability of the material object of faith, and of faith itself, does not exclude the possibility of a change of view on the scientific explanation of some fact connected with revealed truth. Thus the Resurrection of the Body is an Article of Faith, but St. Thomas' exposition of how it takes place does not necessarily bind in conscience. A medieval exposition of a truth may be at variance with the findings of modern science: the findings of true science can never be at variance with the facts of revelation; and it is the facts which we must believe. But a scientific explanation, which does not lessen the authority of a revealed truth, cannot injure faith. It matters little, for instance, where one may think hell is, whether in the centre of the earth or elsewhere, provided one believes in its existence. On the other hand, it is true that scientific theories do sometimes lead to a denial of the facts of revelation, so that a deadlock arises between the theologian and the scientist. In such cases the scientist should yield, because doctrine is in possession, and, whereas the scientist can claim no more for his theory than that it is a theory, the truths of faith were given to us by the Author of all truth. The inference in all such cases must be that the scientist is in error.

The prominence given to science, or pseudo-science, in its relation to faith, is not the least amongst the errors of modern theological speculation. Whilst pretending to leave faith intact,

by confining science to its own sphere of activity, the New Theology, makes faith in reality subject to science.

We have a full explanation of this subjection of faith to science in the Encyclical of Pius X. "Faith," says the Holy Father, "according to the Modernists, must be said to be subject to science, and this not under one, but under three heads. For, first, it must be remarked that in every religious fact, when the divine reality and the believer's experience of it are taken away, all the rest, especially the religious formulas, come within the circle of phenomena and are therefore subject to science. . . . Secondly, although it has been said that God is the object of faith alone, the proposition must be understood of the divine reality, not of the idea of God. The latter is subject to science. . . . Finally, man does not suffer a dualism to exist within him; hence an internal necessity urges the believer so to harmonize faith with science, that faith may not ever gainsay the general idea which science offers of the universe." [1]

The opinions advanced by writers who advocate the necessity of reform in the Church and in faith in order to suit the progress of science had been previously condemned in the Holy Father's decree *Lamentabili*; [2] and the Vatican Council also, in condemning the errors of Günther

[1] Encycl. *Pascendi*, authorized trans., p. 18.
[2] Props. 62, 63, 64, 65.

and the semi-Rationalists of his time, declares that "that sense of the sacred dogmas is to be perpetually retained which our Holy Mother the Church has once declared, and that sense must never be receded from under the appearance and name of a higher knowledge . . . there may be indeed an increase in knowledge, and science, and wisdom, but in the same kind, in the same doctrine, and in the same sense." [1]

Notwithstanding the teaching of the Church certain individuals, and amongst them persons who call themselves Catholics, are so carried away by the views of the pseudo-scientists, that they attempt to apply the new theories to the supernatural—to faith and revelation. Supernatural religion and its development, they say, should be explained in accordance with certain biological laws. Religion is vital, and must, in consequence, vary in perfection according to time, place, environment, and certain needs which are called forth by external circumstances and surroundings.[2] Doctrine and faith, therefore, even in such fundamental truths as the Trinity, the Incarnation, and Redemption, must be remodelled to suit modern progress. Loisy thus writes: "La vie est un movement, et un effort continuelle d'adaptation a descon-

[1] Sess. iii. c. 4.

[2] Cf. G. Tyrrell, *Through Sylla and Charybdis*, chapters viii. and x.

ditions perpetuellement variables et nouvelles. Le christianisme n'a pas échappé a cette loi." [1] This writer, imbued with the evolutionary principles of Herbert Spencer, makes life a continual movement of the subject to adapt itself to environment, and to this law Christianity is no exception. Views no less erroneous have been put forward by Fogazzaro, Semeria, Le Roy, and Tyrrell. The author of the " New Theology," therefore, might well say that " Father Tyrrell, and such as he, are nearer in spirit to the New Theology men, than are the latter to those Protestants who pin their faith to external standards of belief." [2]

It is not difficult to see the influence of the new theories, biological and anthropological, on the religious outlook of the modern unorthodox thinkers. According to the Holy Father's Encyclical, they tell us that " the first motion, so to speak, of every vital phenomenon—and religion, it has been observed, is nothing more—is to be traced to a certain necessity or impulse." Religion or religious sentiment, being at first formless, though vital, develops, by slow degrees, with the progress of human life, of which it is, as has been said, a form. The religious formulæ and the Creed which symbolize the religious sentiment, being joined vitally to it, are subject to its laws, and so change with it. Thus

[1] *L'Evangile et L'Eglise*, p. 112, Paris, 1902.
[2] Rev. R. J. Campbell, *The New Theology*, c. i. p. 13.

the way is open to the intrinsic evolution of dogma." [1]

As instances of this internal evolution, we have novel and radical views promulgated on the Church and the Sacraments. The Church and the Sacraments, it is said, were not immediately instituted by Christ Himself. "Agnosticism forbids such a belief, for Agnosticism sees in Christ nothing but a man, whose religious consciousness, like that of other men, was formed by a gradual process; the law of immanence forbids it, for that law rejects external applications; . . . the law of evolution, also, forbids it; for that law requires time for the germs to develop, and a series of successive circumstances; history, in fine, forbids it; for history shows that such evolution, in reality, has been the course of events." [2] But the Church and the Sacraments may be said to have been mediately instituted by Christ, since they are Christian in origin, and "all Christian consciousness was somehow contained in the consciousness of Christ." [3]

The decree *Lamentabili* contains a syllabus of condemned propositions, on Christ, the Church, and the Sacraments. The leading erroneous idea underlying these condemned propositions is, that the great truths of Catholic faith are a post-Apostolic product, or, at least,

[1] Encycl. *Pascendi*, authorized transl. p. 8.
[2] Ibid. p. 13.
[3] Ibid. p. 21.

are not of Divine origin; thus, it is said that the Divinity of Christ cannot be proved from the Gospels, and that it originated in the Christian consciousness; [1] that the Christ of history is much inferior to the Christ Who is the object of Christian faith.[2] This transfiguration of Christ, by the Christian consciousness, dates even from the days of St. Paul and St. John.[3] Besides, the Resurrection of Christ is not an historical fact. It is supernatural, in the sense that having acquired a place in the Christian consciousness, it became part of the material object of faith.[4] In like manner the doctrine of Christ's death is merely Pauline, and not Evangelic.[5] Again, the organic constitution of the Church should be subject to the evolutionary and changing laws of human society.[6] The pre-eminence of the Roman Church is traceable to political and social conditions; [7] and, consequently, St. Peter did not receive the Primacy from Christ.[8] The Hierarchy and the Sacraments, although in the Gospels in embryo, are the product, in their present form, of the interpretations and evolutions of the Christian consciousness. In a word, religious truth is as changeable as man, and is subject to the same evolutionary laws; [9] and therefore the Articles of the Creed have not the same meaning for Christians of to-day as they had

[1] Prop. 27.
[2] Prop. 29.
[3] Prop. 31.
[4] Prop. 37.
[5] Prop. 38.
[6] Prop. 53.
[7] Prop. 56.
[8] Prop. 55.
[9] Props. 58 and 62.

for the first Christians. Modern Catholicism, therefore, in insisting on the traditional meaning attached to the Articles of the Creed, is opposed to scientific progress.[1]

The same evolutionary laws are applied by these arch-heretics to the Sacraments. The Sacraments were not instituted by Christ, they say, but by the Apostles or their successors. They were suggested by events and circumstances that make them harmonize with the Christian idea, and symbolize God's benign presence among men.[2] The use of Infant Baptism is traceable to evolution, and is not doctrinal but disciplinary.[3] Neither is there any proof that the Sacrament of Confirmation was conferred by the Apostles.[4] The words of St. Paul, in connexion with the institution of the Eucharist, are not to be taken as historically true.[5] The reconciliation of sinners in Penance, exercised under the authority of the Church, was unknown to the first Christians.[6] Nor did St. James promulgate the Sacrament of Extreme Unction ;[7] and Matrimony was unknown until the doctrine of grace, and of the Sacraments, was fully developed.[8]

These errors are not only opposed to Traditional Christianity, and to the teaching of Sacred Scripture, but they involve a perverse, and fundamentally erroneous notion of Christian

[1] Prop. 65.
[2] Props. 40 and 41.
[3] Prop. 43.
[4] Prop. 44.
[5] Prop. 45.
[6] Prop. 46.
[7] Prop. 48.
[8] Prop. 57.

faith. If those who hold them pretend to teach new methods of interpretation, and to broach novel theories about faith, inspiration and revelation, they must present us with principles more convincing than those of religious subjectivism, and try to guide us by laws more intelligible than those of the extreme evolutionist. Theories which do not explain the philosophy of life become more and more alienated from truth when applied to supernatural faith and to religion.

VII.

In brief, then, it may be said that the opinions of those who hold that there has been an objective accretion to doctrine in post-Apostolic times is false, whether the views are those of Rationalists, Semi-Rationalists, Modernists or Protestants of the various shades of religious thought. Speculative Rationalists fail to distinguish between faith and science. They say that true faith, or the true science and understanding of Divine things, will emancipate man from the darkness of traditional and historic faith which has found its best expression in mystery and in symbol. Semi-Rationalists, like Günther, claim for doctrine a more relative value, and say that doctrinal truth is not absolute, but provisional, and should therefore be regulated by the scientific progress of the age. Rationalistic critics, with

the Modernists, do not admit the objective value of revealed truth. To them the laws to which development in religious doctrine are subject are most indefinite, and can only be known by the psychologic condition of believers, or the collective consciousness of the greater number of Christians. Many Protestants are strangely inconsistent in their views on Faith and the stability of supernatural truth. They say, indeed, that doctrine may change, but they call the change a development. As an instance of this, we cite the following words, written in approval of a doctrinal change on the question of Predestination, although the writer curiously enough calls the change a development. "The Act of Declaration, it is true," this writer tells us, "retains a necessary element in regard to salvation, but it repudiates the earlier instrument, in so far as that document limits the Saviourhood of Christ, which it does when it states that while a certain number of the race are elected to be saved, another section, by the absolute decree of God, is predestined to be lost. The cruelty and injustice of these views had long burdened the majority, and the inevitable happened, when the revised formula was drafted, which is a distinct advance, in the direction of Arminianism, upon its predecessor." [1] How the revised formula represents development, and not absolute change,

[1] "The Laws and Limits of Development in Christian Doctrine," *Hibbert Journal*, April, 1906, p. 590.

it is difficult to understand. The writer, however, thinks, with Herder, that doctrine is only the "husk of truth," and consequently that doctrine may be cast aside, while truth, the kernal, lives on. But the Catholic considers doctrine itself to be the kernel, and furthermore, that it does not spring from "religious experience," nor from an attempt of reason "to justify that which the heart immediately appropriates." [1] Such a theory on the origin of doctrine, would indeed make it a mere husk to be cast aside with the change of the religious time-spirit.

St. Vincent of Lerins, in referring to Christian doctrine, writes: "Let the soul's religion imitate the law of the body, which, as years go on, expands and develops to full maturity and yet remains identically what it was. . . . Small are a baby's limbs; a youth's are larger; yet they are the same." [2] But, since Protestantism combines two opposing elements, or attempts to do so at its very outset, development in Protestantism implies change. "Luther," says Cardinal Newman, "started on a double basis, his dogmatic principle being contradicted by his right of private judgment, and his sacramental by his theory of justification." [3] Development, then, in the Protestant sense, implies the predominance of one or other of these two principles; and, as a matter of fact, since Luther's time, one

[1] Ibid. p. 591. [2] Commonit. 23. [3] Op. cit. p. 192.

or other has always been in evidence. After Luther's death, the dogmatic principle prevailed, and "every expression of his (Luther's) upon controverted points became a norm for his party." [1]

Soon after, a reaction took place, and private judgment asserted itself, with the result that dogmatic principles were ignored. Pietism and Rationalism followed, and then Pantheism, as a development of philosophical Pietism, and of Luther's theory of justification. A way was thus opened to Kant, and to the German iconoclasts of philosophic and religious truth. Perversion and contradiction were, however, only a logical development, or rather logical result, from Lutheran principles. Cardinal Newman, therefore, rightly says that various theories of Pantheism were, from the first, "at the bottom of Luther's doctrine and personal character." [2] The consequence is that, in the series of revolutions in Protestant religious thought since Luther's time, truth has suffered so much that it ceases, not merely to be an object of reverence, but even to have any meaning at all; it is supplanted by a subjective feeling or the religion of the heart, and by a vital immanence which is Pantheistic.

Catholicism ever retains its reverence for truth and so much so that the Church is accused by her

[1] Pusey, on *German Rationalism*, p. 21, note.
[2] Op. cit. p. 193.

adversaries of being out of date, and of sticking to old Creeds and formulas, while, all the time, she is heedless of the progress and advance of science. With strange inconsistency, she is also accused of having changed her teaching, and of having invented doctrines to suit her passing needs.

But the Church is, at the same time, rigid and flexible; rigid, in her adherence to truths which are unchangeable, and flexible, in her interpretation of them. History shows that the Church was so with the Arians, Nestorians, and other heretics, who were, in many cases, the occasion of increased doctrinal exposition. She was so in the case of Papal Infallibility, and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception. The Church has not made actual additions to revealed truth, for she is not an "organ of continued revelation," as some erroneously think.[1] On the contrary, as Pius IX teaches, in reference to the Immaculate Conception, the Church *Nihil addit*; she makes no addition to the Deposit of Faith. Catholic doctrine develops, yet without change or accretion in truth; and, if she is erroneously thought to be non-progressive it is because she is true to her principles.

On the contrary, stability in doctrine and matters of faith is incompatible with any Protestant theory of development. If Protestants

[1] Cf. Liddon, Bampton Lectures, *The Divinity of Our Lord*, pp. 434, 435, ed. 1889.

do claim a theory of development, "their theory rests on the application of principles that develop variously, according to those principles." [1] Principle, it has been said, is a better test of heresy than a doctrinal tenet; for there are doctrinal views among Protestants diametrically opposed which are nevertheless reducible to the same principle. A man may be High Church, Low Church, Broad Church, or belong to no Church at all, on the principle of private judgment. Thus Anglican divines boast of the catholicity of their Church, because forsooth it has room within its fold for men of all shades of belief.[2] In this the Anglican Church is true to its principle, although the principle itself is unsound. On the same principle Protestants become Presbyterians and Presbyterians Unitarians.

In heresy, then, diverse and opposite doctrines may be traced to a common principle. Arius and Eunomius, for instance, denied that the Son is consubstantial with the Father; and from this principle both drew conclusions directly opposite. Arius asserted that the Son does not comprehend the Father. Eunomius, that all men comprehend God. Both conclusions are in harmony with the principles of Arianism. In like manner the Antiochenes were sometimes Sabellians and sometimes Nestorians and Monophysites from fidelity to a common principle,

[1] Newman, op. cit. p. 180. [2] Op. cit. p. 181.

namely, that there is no mystery in religion.[1] This could not be so, if the principles were true, as they are in Catholicism; and especially if the guiding principle is infallible authority which of its very nature secures continuity of doctrine, and at the same time safeguards development, of which we shall speak more fully in the succeeding chapter.

[1] Op. cit. p. 181.

CHAPTER VIII.

Development of the Material Object of Faith.

I.

The stability of the material object of faith is such a test of orthodoxy that the Church which can justly claim to have preserved the truths of faith incorrupt, can also claim to be a trustworthy guide in matters of faith. The tenacity with which the Catholic Church adheres to traditional doctrine has been advanced as a sign of her unprogressiveness, and as an argument against her claims to be considered the Church of Christ. But the Catholic Church bases her claims to orthodoxy on the fact that she alone is unchangeable in her adherence to the truths of Traditional Christianity, and in this way she explains her so-called intolerance of those who have departed from Apostolic teaching.

It has been felt on all sides that the Catholic Church, as the exponent of Traditional Christianity, has history on her side; hence the modern attempts of her opponents to discard history and cut it off from faith. Many non-Catholics ignore history and appeal to the Bible as the only test of orthodoxy; for "whatever

history teaches," as Cardinal Newman writes, "whatever it omits, whatever it exaggerates or extenuates, whatever it says and unsays, at least the Christianity of history is not Protestantism."[1] So true is it, on the contrary, that the Christianity of history is Catholic that adverse critics have pushed back the line of cleavage between Catholicism and orthodox Christianity—according to their conception of it—to the days of St. Paul and St. John. Some place even St. Matthew among the first Catholics. This is a great concession, but enlightened Protestantism has been driven to it; and Cardinal Newman felt its force when he wrote: "Protestants can as little bear its (Christianity's) Ante-Nicene as its Post-Tridentine period."[2]

The attempt to represent St. Paul and St. John as the exponents of a Christianity which differed from that of the simple teaching of Christ Himself, or to represent the author of the Fourth Gospel as a philosopher and theologian who has given us a Christianity essentially changed by Hellenic influence and his own religious consciousness, is only a desperate effort to escape from an overwhelming difficulty.

It must be conceded, however, that the Church of to-day presents to us certain features which were unknown, or at least undeveloped, in

[1] Introduction to *Development of Christian Doctrine*, p. 7, ed. 1878.

[2] Ibid.

the Church of primitive Christian times, or even in the Church of the Middle Ages. Doctrines are explicitly taught now which were not taught then, and with this advance in knowledge and belief there has been a corresponding advance in ways and methods of devotion.

The advance and progress in doctrinal knowledge and devotion has given occasion to non-Catholic critics to accuse the Church of changing and corrupting both her doctrinal truth and her practices of devotion. The later promulgations of dogma in the Roman Church, it is said, cannot be called legitimate developments, as they bear no real relationship to the Gospel root.[2] But the Catholic Church appeals to history as a witness of her relationship to the Gospel root. At the same time she asserts that her adversaries are inconsistent in accusing her a one time of conservatism, and at another of a liberalism amounting even to a corruption of the Gospel. The truth is that the Catholic Church is both conservative and progressive. She is conservative, but her conservatism is consistent with her doctrinal development, for in the latter she preserves unity and identity of type.

The Catholic Church represents, not only historically, but also logically, the ancient faith. The constitution of the Church and her mission are such that she must needs develop; while

[1] Cf. *Hibbert Journal*, "Development in Doctrine," April, 1906, p. 595.

at the same time she preserves her identity and continuity, together with unity and power of assimilation.[1] This fact alone shows how much Catholicism differs from other forms of religion, and to what an extent its opponents fail to realize the difference which exists between what is constant and what is variable, between objective truth and subjective knowledge, between the essential and the accidental, between an idea and the elements of which it is composed.[2]

If stability in the material object of faith serves to discriminate the Catholic faith from heretical creeds which are continually shifting, the growth and development of doctrine within the Church herself distinguishes her from the Schismatical Churches which, although conservative in great measure of Apostolic truth, are, nevertheless, stagnant and unprogressive. Life and growth imply unity and direction of energy; and since Christ established His Church as a living power, and as a Kingdom capable of development, the laws which govern her life are so peculiar to herself, that separation from the Church withdraws the separated part from the influence of those laws and leaves it unprogressive, incapable of advance, and even a victim of decay and death.

This fact can be verified by anyone who examines the status of the Eastern Schismatical

[1] Newman, *Development of Christian Doctrine*, c. v.
[2] Cf. Lagrange, O.P., *La Methode Historique*, pp. 172, 173.

Churches. The source of unity and the principle of life is wanting in those Churches, and hence their impotency and stagnation and stunted growth. The principle of unity can only be maintained by submission to the successor of St. Peter in the Primacy; and as life and development must, as a rule, be subject to laws which, in their normal state, are unchangeable, so must growth in supernatural truth be directed by infallible authority. St. Thomas, while affirming the principle of doctrinal development, says that this development must be subject to the guidance and teaching authority of the Roman Pontiff. "To his authority it belongs to add to the Creed, and to determine ultimately those things which are of faith, and which should with unshaken fidelity be held by all." [1] Again he writes: "To him (the Pope) the greater and more difficult questions, in connexion with faith, are to be referred, in virtue of those words of Christ to St. Peter: 'I have prayed for thee that thy faith fail not; and thou being once converted confirm thy brethren.'" [2] St. Thomas proceeds to give his reasons. "There should be," he says, "for the whole Church—according to the words of St. Paul to the Corinthians—one faith. Now I beseech you, brethren (St. Paul writes), by the name of Our Lord Jesus Christ, that you all speak the same thing, and that there be

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 10.
[2] Luke xx. 32.

no schisms among you.' " [1] This is, however, impossible, the Angelic Doctor adds, unless there be one supreme authority to whom all doubts in matters of faith are to be referred.

From time to time as different parts of the material object of faith were assailed by heretics it became necessary for authority to assert itself in defining truth. Error has ever been the occasion of definition and formal teaching on the part of the Church. In this way what had been for a time a matter of opinion became in the end a truth of Catholic faith "Because perverse men pervert Apostolic doctrine, as well as other doctrine and the Scriptures, to their own destruction, it was necessary in times past to give an exposition of faith against rising errors." [2] But even though this exposition had been given on the authority of a General Synod it belonged to the Supreme Pontiff, "by whose authority the Synod is assembled," [3] to confirm it.

II.

It was not necessary that the faithful should at first receive the truths of faith with that fullness and explicitness which, as embodied in Catholic teaching, they now possess; nor was it fitting

[1] 1 Cor. i. 10.
[2] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 10. ad 1.
[3] Ibid. ad 2.

that they should receive them in this way. "It is a characteristic of our minds," says Cardinal Newman, "that they cannot take an object in, which is submitted to them, simply and integrally."[1] And just as a teacher finds it unnecessary to submit every aspect of a truth to his pupils, so in like manner, it was unnecessary that the first teachers of Christianity should expound to their converts all the subtleties of dogmatic truth, and all the phases and aspects which revealed truth may have presented to the minds of those teachers themselves. "The more claim an idea has to be considered living, the more various will be its aspects, and the more social and political its nature, the more complicated and subtle will be its issues, and the longer and more eventful will be its course. And in the number of these special ideas, which from their very depth and richness cannot be fully understood at once, but are more clearly expressed and taught the longer they last—having aspects many and bearings many, mutually connected and growing one out of another, and all parts of a whole with a sympathy and correspondence keeping pace with the ever-changing necessities of the world, multiform, prolific, and ever-resourceful—among these great doctrines surely we Christians shall not refuse a foremost place to Christianity."[2]

[1] Op. cit. p. 55.

[2] Ibid. p. 56.

As the scientist, in the acquisition of some leading doctrine of science, knows, at least implicitly all the phases of truth contained in it, so the Catholic, by his assent to certain central truths of Christianity, believes—at least implicitly—the truths which are contained in them. Explicit faith follows on investigation, inquiry, and definition. The faith of the believer never changes. He has always believed even in those truths which were not explicitly delivered by the Apostles. In Christian and doctrinal development, therefore, there is question, not of a new truth, but of the explicit presentation of a truth already contained in the Deposit of Faith, and which is accepted by the faithful when they accept the truth in which it is contained and the authority of the Church to which all revealed truth has been entrusted.

Doubts and errors regarding certain aspects of revealed truth have arisen from time to time in the minds of many, whose unconditional surrender to the Church's teaching is a sufficient index of their implicit faith in the doctrines afterwards defined. They recognize that it is part of the Church's office to correct erroneous opinions in connexion with the Deposit of Faith. Possibility of error in this matter does not militate against the Catholic position, but rather strengthens it and serves to remind us that individual reason is not the measure of revealed truth. It is only when religious truth is im-

perfectly thought out by individual minds that difficulties and differences of opinion arise. When revealed truth is brought into the crucible of theological and philosophical speculation some begin to entertain doubts on certain matters, so that it becomes necessary for the Church to formulate her teaching. When she does so there is no longer room for doubt or discussion. But while truth remains undefined men are free to discuss it, in accordance with the principle, *in dubiis libertas*. It is in the end, and after the Church's definition, that the believer shows his orthodoxy and loyalty and obedience.

The Mystery of the Blessed Trinity, for instance, had been explicitly believed in by the faithful from the beginning; but the Church defined at a later date certain truths connected with this Mystery which were before obscure. Many erroneous views were put forward in the attempt to reconcile the Unity and Trinity in God. The chief of these centred around Arianism, Semi-Arianism, and Sabellianism. But the Church in various Synods, and notably in the Councils of Nice and Constantinople, gave her decision, and her teaching settled the question for all time.

Again, the necessity of grace for every good and supernatural work, and even for the beginning of faith, was not expressly recognized as Catholic teaching until the Church's condemnation of the Pelagian and Semi-Pelagian heresies. On the question of the re-baptism of heretics an appeal

was made to the custom of the Roman Church, whose practice in this matter represented Apostolic Tradition. The question was decided by Pope Stephen. The dispute ended, and it has since been recognized as a doctrine of faith that even the unbaptized validly administer Baptism, provided the conditions required by the Church are present.

The Church, by virtue of the promises made to her by Christ, has always claimed authority in defining doctrine; hence the saying of St. Augustine, *Roma locuta est; causa finita est.* Various doctrines were expressly formulated by her in connexion with the Incarnation, the Blessed Virgin, the Saints, Grace and Free-Will, Original Sin, the Sacraments, Purgatory, Heaven and Hell; yet in all her definitions there is no departure from revealed truth. Her teaching represents only a development of primitive revelation. There is progress on the part of the faithful, but no change in the object of faith; there is a subjective, but not an objective, change; or to quote the words of Albert the Great, "there is rather an advance of the believer in faith than of faith in the believer." [1]

[1] Albertus Magnus, O.P., 3, dist. 25 art. 1 ad 1.

III.

The Articles of Faith have developed by an exposition of truths which were implicitly delivered by the Apostles. They have also developed by a clearer exposition of those truths which were explicitly delivered by them, as well as by the formal acceptance on the part of the Church of revealed truths contained in certain customs or practices doctrinal and Apostolic.[1]

Certain truths of faith are so difficult to interpret that even on *a priori* grounds the safeguards claimed by Catholics should be admitted by all, did not prejudice so obscure the mind as to prevent it from recognizing what must be normal when there is question of the supernatural. Christianity does not deal with truths for which the mind possesses a natural fitness. It deals with Mysteries revealed to us by God, and which are altogether out of proportion to mere human intelligence and reason. Every person acquainted with the Bible must know how difficult it is to interpret even apparently simple texts of Sacred Scripture. To explain certain fundamental truths, such as the Real Presence of Our Lord in the Blessed Sacrament, the authority of the Church, or some infallible authority, is indispensable. The Mystery

[1] Cf. Tanquerey, *Synop. Theol. Dog.* c. 1 De increm. obj. fid. p. 36, ed. x.

of the Real Presence is a sacramental truth, a practical one, and one which pertains to the daily life of a Christian; yet one may find as many as two hundred interpretations from Protestant sources of the simple text, "This is My Body." Surely the principle which admits so many contradictory views on a question so fundamental is indefensible; and to those who admit any theory of development such contradictory views cannot represent true development. They rather point to a principle which leads to corruption and decay.

St. Peter, in referring to the Epistles of St. Paul, writes, "In which (Epistles) are certain things hard to be understood, which the unlearned and unstable wrest, as they do also the other Scriptures, to their own destruction." [1] We have St. Peter himself here testifying that no amount of human learning can so elevate the mind as to make it a fitting norm for the recognition of supernatural truth, or of those Mysteries which transcend all that is natural to man. We cannot subscribe, therefore, to the opinion of certain Catholic writers who think that the natural sciences, alone and unaided, help to prepare men for a more ready understanding of supernatural truth.[2] The dividing line between the natural and supernatural must

[1] 2 Peter iii. 16.

[2] Cf. Bonomelli, *Opusc. Sequiamo La Ragione. La Chiesa*, Conf. xv., p. 350.

be kept clear, if we are to avoid that confusion of thought which is so evident in the writings of many misguided apologists and leading heretics of our time.

It is a fact which cannot be controverted that many poor and illiterate people unhesitatingly accept the truths of faith and believe in them, while others who are learned reject them. Learning alone, without supernatural aid, cannot contribute to the positive acceptance of the truths of faith, or even to their interpretation. It may, indeed, remove the impediments to faith, such as are erroneous views in connexion with the *preambula* of faith.

Since Christ established a Visible Church to safeguard unity and development of doctrine, He must have provided her with the means to secure both the one and the other. "He gives," says St. Paul, "some apostles and some prophets, and other some evangelists, and other some pastors and doctors, for the perfecting of the saints, for the working of the ministry, for the edifying of the body of Christ." [1] The office of a doctor is to elucidate and expound what is difficult to understand. Christ, for that purpose, sent the Apostles to teach. "Going, therefore," He said, "teach ye all nations." [2] This work was to continue, and Christ promised His abiding assistance, and that of the

[1] Eph. iv. 11-12.

[2] Matt. xxviii. 19.

Holy Spirit until the end of time, "until we all meet unto the unity of faith, and of the knowledge of the Son of God, unto a perfect man, unto the measure of the age of the fulness of Christ."[1] As this assistance was to be effective in a concrete body of human beings, or in His Kingdom here on earth, it must needs leave a visible impress on His Church, and hence we have her progress and development. Our Lord Himself referred to this development when He compared His Kingdom to the leaven which a woman hides in three measures of meal which influences, and after some time leavens, the whole mass.[2]

IV.

Under the guidance of the Church, development in the material object of faith becomes a law, or rather the result of a well-defined law, of growth and progress. Such a result must be considered inevitable, especially when one remembers the sublime teaching of the Gospel, the limitations of the human mind, which arrives at knowledge by analysis and synthesis, the universality of the Gospel teaching for all times and places, the speculations of philosophers and theologians, and the erroneous teaching of heretics and unbelievers. "If Christianity," says Cardinal

[1] Eph. iv. 13.

[2] Matt. xiii. 33.

Newman, "be a universal religion, suited not simply to one locality or period, but to all times and places, it cannot but vary in its relations and dealings towards the world around it, that is, it will develop."[1]

Newman, before his conversion, recognized the need of some theory of development which might serve to explain the acceptance, not merely by the Roman Church, but also by the Anglican Communion, of certain doctrines which are not contained in Scriptural teaching. Refusing to recognize in Tradition a distinct source of revealed truth, and finding no reference in Sacred Scripture to certain doctrines to which he was ready to subscribe, Newman thought that the existence of such doctrines might be explained by a theory of development which Catholics cannot admit as orthodox. Catholics know that the truths of revelation were given in full to the Apostles, and that developed doctrine was really contained in those truths, even though implicitly.

The developed doctrine, then, is never an accretion, nor is any addition made to the Deposit of Revelation from a feeling that something is required to supply a deficiency, or to complete a system which was perfect in outline but defective in details, and which now contains truths which were not—so far as we know from Scripture—really revealed to the Apostles by the Divine

[1] Op. cit. p. 58.

Founder, or by the Holy Spirit. Newman looked upon the doctrines of Penance and Purgatory as developments inasmuch as they are necessary for the filling in of a Divine Plan. Hence his view that Penance is a development of the doctrine of Baptism, since a baptized Christian must have some remedy for sin after Baptism. The evident limitations of Sacred Scripture, and its inadequacy to explain the truths to which Newman's mind had leanings, must have presented a serious difficulty to him, and one must sympathize with an attempt to make good the loss in a way which seemed the most logical, and, in fact, the only possible way for him under the circumstances. Referring to Sacred Scripture as the rule of faith, he thus writes: "There is not one of us but has exceeded by transgression its revealed Ritual, and finds himself in consequence thrown upon those infinite sources of Divine Love which are stored in Christ, but have not been drawn out into form in the appointment of the Gospel." [1] He evidently looked upon the Sacred Scriptures as defective. "Since then," he writes, "Scripture needs completion, the question is brought to this issue, whether defect or inchoateness in its doctrines be, or be not, an antecedent probability in favour of a development of them." [2] The logical necessity of such a development was forced upon the mind of

[1] *Doctrine of Justification*, Lect. xiii.
[2] *Development of Doctrine*, p. 62.

Newman, and although he ignored Tradition (as a distinct depository of revealed truth) he felt, nevertheless, the need of a Church answering in outline to what the Church of Christ professes to be.

Speaking of Penance as a logical consequent on Baptism, and therefore as a development of it, one is surprised that Newman failed to find express reference to a method of reconciliation after Baptism in the words of Our Lord to St. Peter, when He gave to that Apostle the keys of the kingdom of heaven, and said: "Whatsoever thou shalt bind upon earth it shall be bound also in heaven, and whatsoever thou shalt loose on earth it shall be loosed also in heaven."[1] Christ also gave to the other Apostles the power of binding and loosing in spiritual matters,[2] although this power was subject to the power of the Keys. This truth, as it stands expressed in Scripture, points to a development representing the Church's teaching on Laws, Indulgences, and Penance; but there is yet fuller and more definite teaching in reference to Penance in the words of Christ to His Apostles, when He said: "Receive ye the Holy Ghost. Whose sins you shall forgive, they are forgiven them; and whose sins you shall retain they are retained."[3] But Newman was even at this time under the influence of that teaching which received merited condem-

[1] Matt. xvi. 19.
[2] Matt. xviii. 18.
[3] John xx. 22-23.

nation from the Council of Trent when that Council anathematized those who hold that "the words of Christ in St. John are not to be understood of the power of remitting and retaining sin in the Sacrament of Penance, as the Catholic Church from the beginning has always taught, but . . . of the authority of preaching the Gospel."[1]

It seems to have been Newman's view at this time that revelation was not delivered in its fullness to the Apostles, and was not registered as such in Sacred Scripture. He therefore wrote as follows concerning Infant Baptism: "It would be natural in any Christian father, in the absence of a rule, to bring his children for Baptism; such in this instance would be the practical development of his faith in Christ and love for his offspring; still a development it is,—necessarily required, yet, as far as we know, not provided for his need by direct precept in the revelation as originally given." [2]

It is not surprising, then, that Newman, on the Protestant assumption that the Bible, and the Bible alone, contains the Deposit of Revelation, was driven from an analogy existing between the natural and the supernatural to parallelism. As he did not find the fullness of revelation, or the doctrine of an Infallible Church, in the Creed which he professed, he was driven by the force of circumstances to fill in the "gaps,"

[1] Concil. Trid. Sess. xiv. Can. 3.
[2] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 60, 61.

as he calls them, "which occur in the structure of the original Creed of the Church." [1] It is on this principle he relies—when he considers that a father is urged by his faith and by necessity to see that his infant is baptized—rather than on a precept from revelation. In the same way, when referring to Butler's *Analogy*, in which that prelate instances examples of development of doctrine into worship, he adds: "A development converse to that which Butler speaks of must now be mentioned. As certain objects excite certain devotions and sentiments, so do sentiments imply objects and duties. Thus, conscience, the existence of which we cannot deny, is a proof of the doctrine of a moral governor which alone gives it a meaning and a scope, that is, the doctrine of a Judge and Judgment to come is a development of the phenomenon of conscience." [2] From an analogy in nature, such as that which exists between supply and demand, Newman thought it possible to account for certain doctrines without necessarily having recourse to a direct revelation in which they are implicitly contained.

We have discussed this aspect of Newman's theory of development at some length because of the attempts which Modernsts have made to claim him as the coryphaeus of Modernist teaching. We have seen Newman's difficult posi-

[1] *Development of Christian Doctrine* p. 63. [2] Ibid. p. 48.

tion as a Protestant, and his strategic attempt to supply the missing link which Protestantism could not give him. He had neither Tradition nor an Infallible Church to guide him; yet he never intended to make religious sentiment the source of faith and revelation, nor did he suppose that developed doctrine is an outer expression of the needs or desires of the believer. He did think that certain truths are suggested to the believer, inasmuch as they are required to fill in an objective plan, the fullness of which we have not detailed for us in Sacred Scripture. Whether, therefore, Newman admitted that such developed truths were revealed, though unwritten, or whether he supposed that they were not even revealed, on neither hypothesis does his theory savour of Modernism. Even on the latter assumption all developed doctrine would appeal to him as if revealed, especially in view of a principle, which he borrowed from Butler, that relatives, when revealed, even though they are non-predicamental, reveal their correlatives. Moreover, Newman speaks of the developed doctrine as a growth; while his reference to faith as revealing its object must be understood in an orthodox sense. Faith and religious sentiment do tend towards their proper objects, but they cannot be accepted as the rule, or standard, or criterion of the truths in which we must believe, much less can a sentiment be the source from which they spring.

V.

The Catholic Church is often accused by her adversaries of corrupting the truths of faith. But it is not the Catholic Church which has corrupted the doctrines of revelation. Her developed doctrine has proceeded from a double source of revealed truth—from Scripture and Tradition. The Catholic Church teaches that she received from the Apostles truths which are not contained in Sacred Scripture. Protestants, on the other hand, contend that the Bible alone is the guide to faith. At the same time they profess doctrines which are not contained in the Bible. "What prominence has the Royal Supremacy in the New Testament, or the lawfulness of bearing arms, or the duty of public worship, or the substitution of the first day of the week for the seventh, or Infant Baptism, to say nothing of the fundamental principle that the Bible, and the Bible only, is the religion of Protestants?" [1]

The Catholic Church is no less orthodox in her attitude in defining doctrinal truth now than she was in the days of the Arian and Nestorian controversies. In defining Papal Infallibility, and the doctrine of the Immaculate Conception, she was guided by laws, and proceeded upon principles identical with those which directed her in the subtle questions of the Homousion and Theotòkos. Those questions

[1] Newman, op. cit. pp. 58, 59.

could only be settled by an appeal to authority, yet the followers of Arius and Nestorius looked upon the Church's definitions as corruptions of Divine truth. Even then the Church claimed to be the only orthodox guide in matters of faith, and that on the basis of an authority Divine in its institution. She alone claimed to possess a residue of revelation which was not contained in Sacred Scripture; and her adversaries could not bring forward arguments to prove that her teaching was in any way contrary to what Sacred Scripture taught.

If, at the present time, the Church exceeds the limits of explicit Scriptural doctrine she can claim the right to do so if her principles are once admitted. It would be more consistent, therefore, for those who accuse the Catholic Church of corrupting revealed truth, to examine the principles on which she proceeds before accusing her of corrupting doctrine. She is at least consistent; while Protestantism, depending on the Bible alone, inconsistently admits certain doctrines which are not contained in the Bible. We question, therefore, the accuracy of the following statement of Macaulay, even in its application to Protestantism: "A Christian," he writes, "of the fifth century with a Bible is on a par with a Christian of the nineteenth century with a Bible, candour and natural acuteness being of course supposed equal." [1]

[1] *Essay on Ranke's History of the Popes.*

It has ever been the wisdom of Catholicism to avoid extremes, and therefore the Church in her definitions has in many cases taken the middle course between opposing heresies. She defined the unity of Person and the two-fold Nature in Christ as a mean between the extreme and opposite heresies of Nestorius and Eutyches. Theodore of Mopsuestia in attempting to refute the teaching of Apollinaris—who practically denied the perfection of Christ's human nature—went so far as to deny that Mary is the Mother of God. He thus gave the key to Nestorius. The Church's teaching at Ephesus was, that as Christ is a perfect man, and as Mary is the mother of a man who, by the Hypostatic Union, is also God, she is also the Mother of God. Yet there still remained the possibility of other errors in this connexion, for the Church in her definitions generally leaves a residue of truth untouched. Many, therefore, denied Mary's Immaculate Conception. But it is becoming that she who is the Mother of God should be born Immaculate; and the truth of this doctrine passed outside the pale of opinion or doubt when it was defined as part of revealed truth by Pius IX. Those, therefore, who assert that this doctrine is untrue, must first get rid of the principle which determined the orthodoxy of the doctrine before attempting to attack the doctrine itself, and for that purpose they must question the right of the Fathers of Nice, Constantinople, Ephesus, and Chalcedon

in their definitions on developed Christian doctrine. Many advanced non-Catholic critics, driven to bay on this point, question the definitions even of the Nicene and post-Nicene Fathers. They affirm that the Catholic principle of development cannot be reconciled with the simple teaching of Christ, and that Christianity, even in its very cradle, swerved from orthodoxy. Such an assertion, needless to say, falsifies the teaching of Christ, and renders null the promises which He made to His Church.

Where instances of apparent change in doctrinal practices are observable, it will be found, on examination, that the change is only disciplinary, or that it has reference to Sacramental doctrines in which the new form contains the doctrine, just as it was contained in the older form. It has been asserted, for instance, that Communion under one kind implies a change, and indeed a substantial change, in connexion with the doctrine of the Blessed Eucharist. Those who raise this difficulty should first examine the Church's teaching, and if they do so they will find that she teaches that the whole Christ, Body and Blood, Soul and Divinity, is received under either species. From the accusation made against the Church under this heading one is justified in concluding that those who made the charge think it possible to divide Christ even after His Resurrection. If they do not think so, how is it possible to accuse the Church of a substantial

change in doctrine in her present-day practice of giving Holy Communion to the faithful under one kind? But if the matter is merely disciplinary, and if the Church is a society, we cannot question the right which she claims in common with other societies to make disciplinary laws. We know that in the early Christian Church infants were admitted to Holy Communion, and just as the Church in later times exercised her disciplinary powers in prohibiting infant Communion, so did she also exercise them in forbidding the faithful to receive the chalice. In either case there was a sufficient reason for the change; and even though a practice is of Apostolic origin she still claims the right—when she has a sufficient reason—to make a disciplinary change.

According to St. Augustine the practice of giving infants Holy Communion dates even from Apostolic times.[1] On the other hand, so far as we know from the Gospel, Christ Himself gave Holy Communion to the two disciples at Emmaus under the appearance of bread alone,[2] and St. Luke makes no mention of the chalice when he refers, in the Acts of the Apostles, to the breaking of bread.[3]

VI.

Many non-Catholics are willing to accept certain portions of developed doctrine. The reasons

[1] Cf. Newman, op. cit. p. 133.
[2] Luke xxiv. 30.
[3] Acts ii. 42, 46.

which they give for rejecting other portions should, if valid, hold for the rejection of the truths which they accept. We are supplied with instances of the latter in connexion with developments which took place after the condemnation of the Nestorian and Monophysite heresies. Arius had supported his teaching in reference to the inferiority of the Son by an appeal to one phase of the Platonic theory of the Logos, and by misrepresentations of some, perhaps loosely-phrased, passages of the ante-Nicene Fathers. After the condemnation of Arius, reaction against his teaching, as well as against that of Nestorius, led to the opposite and heterodox teaching of Eutyches and Apollinaris, which tended to make Christ entirely Divine. The Church, while allowing Divine honour to be given to Christ because of the Hypostatic Union, taught that Christ, though God, is truly man. This development many non-Catholics admit, but they refuse to see the possibility of further developments.

The doctrinal advance in connexion with the human side of Christ brought into prominence other revealed truths, as, for instance, the honour due to Christ's Mystical Body, His Saints, and above all His Blessed Mother. With this elevation of the Saints is associated their office of mediatorship. God has always chosen to effect His work by means of creatures. In the Old Law He sent His angels to represent Him, and they—because

of their high office—became in themselves[1] the objects of a special cultus. Instead of ceasing with the coming of Christ, or being confined to the angels, or to Himself as Chief Mediator, the office of mediatorship became more universal. The extension of this office harmonizes well with the economy of Redemption, for "the Catholic polemic," writes Cardinal Newman, "in view of the Arian and Monophysite errors . . . became the natural introduction to the *cultus sanctorum*." St. Athanasius, therefore, in writing against the Arians, teaches that the Word was made flesh in order that by our relationship to the Body of Christ we might become God's temple, so that through the Redemption God might be honoured in us.[2]

The Mystery of the Incarnation sheds much light on Catholic doctrine and devotion. It is the central truth of Christianity, and orthodox belief in it points the way to devotion to the Blessed Virgin and the Saints, to devotion also to Relics, and to belief in the sacramental system in its fullness, and even to faith in a doctrine so apparently remote from it as is the superiority of the state of virginity over that of marriage; and even though these truths are not implicitly contained in the doctrine of the Incarnation, yet their connexion with it is apparent.

[1] Cf. Cardinal Newman, *Via Media*, vol. ii. p. 104, note.
[2] Athan. Orat. i., cont. Arian, 41, 42.

As man's body has contributed so much to his downfall and spiritual ruin, it is fitting that it should be selected by God as an instrument of his salvation and glory. Man's body will share in the sanctity and glory of his soul, and therefore it is becoming that a twofold element, the spiritual and the material, should be combined in his sanctification.[1] God could have brought men back to Himself without using material elements in this way; but it was His wish to win their love and allegiance in a human way, and so He decreed the Incarnation, and the many doctrines connected with it. In this Mystery symbolism has reached its ultimate and noblest perfection; for Christ Who on this earth lived and died as man is also God. As this Mystery responds to a very great need in man, so are there other needs to which God has not refused to be responsive. We have, therefore, the Sacraments and the Sacramentals, the Saints, with their Relics and Images, and, above all, the Holy Mother of God. All these have entered, immediately or mediately, as symbols and as facts, into the Divine Plan. God has willed it to be so because of our needs and His own wise ends, and we are not free to question His Divine Will.

It is unfair, then, for non-Catholics to assail Catholic practices of devotion, and especially so when the critics neglect to give due consideration

[1] Cf. *Sum. Theol.* P. III. Q. I. art. 2; and Q. LX. art. 4.

to the Divine Plan, or are even unwilling to find out whether God's Will may be in harmony with their own hereditary religious views and beliefs. They may endeavour, indeed, to support their opinions by isolated texts from Sacred Scripture, and in this way try to prove the unsoundness of certain Catholic beliefs and practices. They may assert, for instance, that the devotion of Catholics to Images is a violation of one of the Commandments of the Decalogue. The Jews, it is true, were forbidden to give honour to images, but for obvious reasons. Jewish history definitely points to the proneness of the Jews to idolatry. On the other hand, the Mystery of the Incarnation makes the possibility of idolatry very remote, while devotion to Images helps to promote devotion to the Central Figure in the Incarnation. Circumstances and times as well as religion are so different now, that there is ample reason why God should permit, or even prescribe, to Christians what He prohibited to the Jews. Moreover, many of the prescribed Jewish ordinances were cancelled; and man, St. Paul tells us, is not justified by the works of the Law. On this point Cardinal Newman writes: "It may reasonably be questioned, then, whether the Commandment which stands second in our Decalogue, on which the prohibition of Images is principally grounded, was intended in its letter for more than temporary observance. So far is certain, that though none could surpass

the Jews in its literal observance, nevertheless this did not save them from the punishments attached to the violation of it. If this be so, the literal is not its true and evangelical import." [1] We see, then, how futile it is to appeal to the Old Testament to support Christian teaching, without a rule of interpretation by which we may be enabled to distinguish what was permanent in the Old Testament from what was merely transitory.

VII.

A doctrine which at first sight may seem to be an innovation, and inconsistent with certain fundamental truths, will be found, on closer examination, to be a development inalienably connected with revealed truth. We are supplied with an instance of this in the case of the Trinity. To the human mind, unaided by faith, scarcely anything seems so contradictory as the existence of three Persons in One God; and yet one may truly say with Petavius that, far from disproving the Unity and Simplicity of God, the distinction of Persons rather points to the doctrine that God is One and most Simple.[2]

Again, certain doctrines seem so necessary that it is difficult to understand how Christians can reasonably reject the teaching of Tradition

[1] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, pp. 421, 422.
[2] Petavius, S.J., *De Deo*, lib. ii. c. 4, sect. 8.

in reference to them; thus the doctrine of Purgatory, apart from its revelation, is in perfect harmony with the teaching of the Church at all times on the necessity of penance and satisfaction for post-Baptismal sin. Sins committed after Baptism must be purged by penance and discipline, and this discipline is so necessary, as Clement of Alexandria tells us, that if it does not take place in this life, it must take place after death, and is then effected, not by a destructive, but by a discriminating fire.

When people say that doctrines like those of Purgatory and Indulgences are not Apostolic, they should remember that they are not justified in refusing to admit the doctrines simply because the devotion of the Early Christians in connexion with their belief in them was less in evidence than devotional practices in connexion with them are among Catholics now. When the love of Christ and the ardent desire for suffering, and even of martyrdom, ceased to burn in men's souls, and when the rigidity of the ecclesiastical canons was relaxed, the doctrines of Purgatory and Indulgences necessarily became more prominent in daily practice.

Many fail to understand even the principles and causes that govern doctrinal development. Pfliederer, referring to the Pope's Infallibility, thus writes: "The alleged infallible authority is itself a product of the general development, in that it participates in its changes, and is

therefore subject, like every other historical phenomenon, to the law of relativity."[1] These words were written for the purpose of showing that, if development in Catholic doctrine be admitted, it is impossible that it could have taken place under the guidance of Papal authority since Papal authority itself is subject to the law of development.

There is an obvious fallacy underlying the suggestion; for even though Papal Infallibility is a doctrine which was left undefined until the time of the Vatican Council, that Council did not introduce it. It merely declared its Divine origin. When Catholics speak of doctrinal development, they speak of the advance of the believer in faith, and not of the introduction of a Creed containing new doctrine. The advance, then, in matters pertaining to doctrine, belongs to the Church Believing or to the faithful, and not to the Church Teaching. But, as a matter of fact, Papal authority was always acknowledged even by the faithful. It was too obvious, too prosaic, and too concrete a fact to be ignored, much less to be forgotten.

It is historically certain that even from the very beginning, when there was question of settling what pertained to the universal belief of the faithful, the Pope's decision was ultimate and irrevocable. To refer to his authority,

[1] Pfliederer, *Development of Theology*, Bk. iv: c. ii., p. 365.

therefore, as a doctrinal growth involves an erroneous conception of Catholic development; while even if it be granted that the full extent of the Pope's authority was unknown to the first Christians, still his authority was there, and development was safe under its guidance. "Supposing there be otherwise reason for saying that the Papal Supremacy," writes Cardinal Newman,[1] "is part of Christianity, there is nothing in the early history of the Church to contradict it," and "no doctrine is defined till it is violated."

Apart from the promises made by Christ to St. Peter and the *a priori* assumption of the necessity of Papal Supremacy and Infallibility for the existence of an institution such as the Church professes to be, we have undoubted evidence of their existence even in the first centuries. Amongst those who testify to the pre-eminence of the Roman Church are St. Clement of Rome, St. Ignatius of Antioch, St. Polycarp, St. Irenæus, with the heretics Marcion, Praxeas and the Montanists, including Tertullian, also the historians Socrates [2] and Sozomen.[3] SS. Jerome and Basil acknowledged the pre-eminence of Pope Damasus, and the latter, in a letter addressed to the Eastern Bishops (A.D. 382), calls those Bishops his sons.[4] But, perhaps, the bond

[1] *Development of Christian Doctrine*, p. 154.
[2] Hist., lib. ii. c. 17. [3] Hist., lib. iii. c. 10.
[4] *Theod. Hist.* v. 10.

of love which united the early Christians saved them from many of those divisions and differences which nowadays call for the intervention of Papal authority. Besides, Imperial tyranny kept it in check, as it did the Creed and the Canons of Divine and Apostolic Tradition.

VIII.

The Apostles, although they preached the truths of revelation in their fullness, did not consider it necessary to descend to minute detail in reference to every aspect of Divine truth, nor was it convenient that they should do so. Many doctrinal details could only appeal to a people with a more advanced philosophic knowledge, or to a people with a past more congenial to a detailed knowledge of Christian truth, than were the first converts to Christianity. Besides, a detailed explanation of doctrine to the first Christian converts would only have obscured the more fundamental truths in which the others are implicitly contained. To have discoursed on the number of Wills in Christ, and on the doctrine of the *Filioque* to humble Jews, or even to more cultured Gentiles, when there was question of accepting the Incarnation and Atonement, could not have strengthened the hands of the Apostles in their appeal to a Jewish and a

Pagan world. Christ established an infallible Church under whose guidance those truths and many others were taught when they appealed to the Christian consciousness, or when philosophic speculation brought them into prominence, or even when reason unduly asserted itself in propagating errors which contradict, or lead to the denial of, truths contained in the teaching of the Apostles. The Apostles had to act prudently, and consult for the antecedents, education, prejudices, and temperament, of their disciples. In this way they initiated a *disciplina arcani* which became prominent at a later period when the doctrine of the Real Presence was withheld from the Catechumens and even from those to whom the Articles of the Creed were known.

The primary and fundamental truths of revelation should first appear, both in the preaching of the Apostles and in the profession of Christian faith. From these developed the truths next in order, hence "what is of a prior order would claim to be proposed, accepted, weighed, analysed and settled, before what comes after in order. . . . For, as in the objective truths themselves there is a gradation of ontological, so also in the subjective process of the intellectual development, and of their outward manifestation, there is a subordination of logical, sequence." [1] Because of

[1] Livius, *B. Virgin in the Fathers*, p. 18.

the ontological order in the truths themselves, some of them, such as the cultus of the Saints and Relics, together with certain phases of belief and devotion connected with the Blessed Virgin, would appear late in the series of defined truths. But, apart from the ontological and logical sequence in doctrinal truth, there is the extrinsic reason already suggested, namely, the unfitness of the faithful at an early period to receive in its fullness and explicitness revealed doctrine. Livius, therefore, writes : " There were some points of the New Testament revelation which—relatively to the circumstances of those to whom the faith was preached in the first ages of the Church—it did not consist with Christian prudence to bring all at once into prominence, and to insist upon explicitly in detail everywhere, and at all times, . . . for example, the dignity and prerogatives of Mary, His (Christ's) ever Virgin Mother ; the honour and devotion due to her, to the Angels and Saints ; the power of their intercession ; the practice of venerating and invoking them ; the religious use of Images and Pictures representing the Word Incarnate, and the Saints in glory." [1]

The Apostles approached the Jews in one spirit and the Gentiles in another. "If, then, it was a duty of charity to consult largely the prejudices of those who had always been accustomed to

[1] Ibid. pp. 18, 19.

the restrictive enactments of the Mosaic law, as we know the Apostles did, it was none the less clearly incumbent upon all those who were responsible for preserving untainted the religion of Jesus Christ, to guard it from any admixture of the anthropomorphic tendencies so rife in the ancient Pagan world. Hence, obviously it would not have been consistent with Christian prudence to set forth very prominently before the first Christians the cultus of the Saints, or to tolerate —much less to encourage—generally the use of images in public worship while there was any appreciable danger of such representations of Christ and His saints being abused by half-instructed neophytes, and so also in other cognate matters." [1]

Notwithstanding the explanation usually given of this vigilance and prudence on the part of the spiritual guides of the faithful in the early Church, some non-Catholic writers say that the Mysteries and truths in connexion with the *disciplina arcani* are corruptions, and are not a part of the Christian Deposit. Such a conclusion is unwarranted. "God," writes J. B. Morris, "let the awful secret escape (so to speak) by degrees. First men dreamt a child was slaughtered in the rites of Christians; by degrees they knew something more was there, and of a more mysterious kind; now all men know that

[1] Livius, ibid. pp. 19, 20.

we believe that the Flesh and Blood and Soul of God the Son is present on our altars. In a similar way the body of her from whom He took that flesh was first thought to have been defiled by adultery ; then she was thought to have fallen so low as to have other children after God ; then she was proclaimed Mother of God ; then other titles of honour came before the world ; and now heretics and heathens can learn that we claim for the soul and body of Mary absolute immunity from sin." [1]

St. Vincent of Lerins, in endeavouring to provide a rule by which the faithful might discern truth from falsehood in matters of faith, formulated his well-known axiom "*quod semper, quod ubique, quod ab omnibus.*" This rule is sufficiently comprehensive since explicit faith in every doctrine which is defined or definable is not necessary. Implicit faith is enough, and is given by every Catholic united to the centre of authority. That St. Vincent's rule requires such a union with the Holy See is clear from the manner in which he treats of the differences which existed between Pope Stephen and the African Bishops on the question of the re-baptism of heretics. On that occasion the orthodox teaching was not held everywhere and by all, just as other doctrines, denied by the Arians, Donatists, and other heretics and schismatics of a later period,

[1] *Jesus the Son of Mary*, vol. ii. p. 366, 1851.

were not held everywhere and by all; hence the insertion of the important word *semper* in St. Vincent's rule. St. Vincent, in deciding against Cyprian and the African Bishops, said: "Nihil innovetur nisi quod traditium est." All heresy is an innovation. It is a departure from an original type, and from the teaching of the Traditional Church and Historic Christianity. The developed doctrines of the Catholic Church can be easily recognized. Even though they are in advance of the teaching and the decrees of the First Councils of the Church and of the Fathers, they are, nevertheless, in harmony with them, for they preserve what Newman calls identity of type, continuity of principle, logical sequence, conservative action upon their past, and chronic vigour.

The principle of development was well known to St. Vincent of Lerins. He writes: "Let the soul's religion imitate the law of the body which as years go on develops indeed . . . and yet remains identically what it was." [1] The doctrine of development, then, instead of disproving the orthodoxy of the Church's teaching, brings the reality of her life, her unity, and veracity, more prominently before us, and therefore "not only accounts for certain facts, but, being itself a remarkable philosophical phenomenon, giving a character to the whole course of Christian thought

[1] Commonit 22.

. . It served as a sort of test which the Anglican could not exhibit, that modern Rome was in truth ancient Antioch, Alexandria and Constantinople, just as a mathematical curve has its own law and expression." [1]

IX.

As the Apostles did not deliver the truths of faith with that explicitness which they now possess as embodied in the definitions of the Church, whose teaching represents to us what "the Apostles would have said under other circumstances, or if they had been asked, or in view of certain repressings of error," [2] it may be interesting to consider the extent of the Apostles' knowledge in this matter. St. Thomas asserts that those who were nearer to Christ in point of time had a more intimate knowledge of the doctrines of faith than those more remote. So that St. John the Baptist, according to this view, was more enlightened than the Doctors of the Mosaic law, and Moses more than Abraham. On the same principle the Apostles were more enlightened than their successors.[3]

The Apostles' knowledge of the intricacies of faith was not acquired by study, like that

[1] Newman, *Apolog.* p. 198, ed. 1878.
[2] *Letter to the Duke of Norfolk*, p. 106.
[3] Cf. *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 7. ad 4; Q. CLXXIV. art. 6; and Cajetan, O.P., *supra id.*

of the learned theologian. Their knowledge was infused. But did that knowledge, which was more penetrating than that of the most learned theologian, necessarily include the knowledge of every truth defined or definable by the Church under any possible form in which it might appear, should error in doctrine necessitate a definition on the matter; or, did the Apostles know *in actu signato* every possible development of revealed truth?

There is no reason why their infused knowledge should imply such an extraordinary psychological forecast. "It is not probable," writes Bainvel, "that the abstract formulas, or the knowledge of reflex and analytic single dogmas, as they are single and abstract, were explicitly in their minds." [1] But the Apostles, under the light of the Holy Ghost, had a more direct, penetrating, concrete, and practical knowledge of the truths of revelation than any of their successors, without however possessing the analytic, scientific, and systematic knowledge which a prolonged course of theology gives to the theologian.

The direct, penetrating, and far-reaching knowledge of the Apostles was unique, and was necessary for the objective completeness and full deliverance of the Deposit of Faith. They had to make provision for all the possible difficulties

[1] *De Magisterio Vivo*, p. 138.

that might afterwards arise, and thus supply their successors with weapons to meet every possible error.

When it is asserted that the Apostles did not necessarily possess that scientific and analytical knowledge which development of doctrine and the Church's definitions supply to the theologian, it must not be inferred that their knowledge of certain truths was merely implicit. Their knowledge was acquired by direct revelation and was, under the light of the Holy Ghost, so intense that they knew, even explicitly, the doctrines afterwards developed in the Church, though not necessarily in the terms in which those doctrines have been defined.

Development, then, is formally a law of the Believing Church, for the Teaching Church was perfect even in the beginning. St. Thomas, in proposing to himself an objection, suggests in his reply that although the Church Teaching or the *Ecclesia Docens* was perfect in the beginning—since, as such, she is rather an efficient cause—yet the Church Believing or the *Ecclesia Discens* was less perfect, because, as such, the Church resembles a material cause. In the order of efficient causality that which is first is more perfect, while the contrary is true when there is question of material causality.[1] Hence, in deciding matters of faith recourse is had to the

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 7 ad 3.

teaching of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church who were nearer to the Apostles. Cardinal Cajetan remarks, however, that, although in the Teaching Church the knowledge of the truths of faith is in proportion to the proximity of her Doctors in point of time to Christ, yet theological knowledge is not necessarily restricted to that order.

Though the theory of doctrinal development has received special attention in recent years, it was, as a matter of fact, always recognized in the Church. This is known to all students who have read the Commonitory of St. Vincent of Lerins. St. Augustine says: "Many truths were latent in the Scriptures, and when heretics were cut off they beset the Church of God with questionings, and those things which were latent became manifest and the will of God understood." [1] And St. Leo Magnus writes: "The Catholic faith is unchangeable, though it is made stronger and clearer through the agency of its adversaries." [2] To St. Vincent of Lerins, however, we owe the first scientific exposition of the theory of development. He was the first to show how change in doctrine leads to weakness and death, whereas in following the lines of growth and progress, faith, instead of being weakened, is rather strengthened and consolidated by time.[3]

Now, since the Church is a living organic

[1] In Psalm liv. [2] Epistle 102. [3] Commonit. 23.

whole, development in doctrine was always in evidence, so that even the Epistles of St. Paul and the Gospel of St. John may be considered developments of the teaching of the Synoptic Gospels. Even up to the third century certain doctrines connected with Penance and the Hierarchy remained undeveloped.[1]

As an explanation, however, doctrinal development did not receive much attention until the rise of the historic method and the theory of evolution. The historic anachronisms which were associated in men's minds with the Primitive Church during the period which immediately preceded the Protestant Reformation, are a sufficient indication that the theory was then very much in abeyance. Petavius, however, foreshadowed the modern methods in attempting to meet the Protestant appeal to history, while Drew, Moehler, Newman and many others have laboured with success in identifying the Catholic Church of to-day with that of the Fathers.

[1] Tixeront, *Histoire des Dogmes*, p. 380, 1903.

CHAPTER IX.

The Church the Proximate Rule of Faith.

I.

The reason or motive which moves the believer to assent to the truths of faith is Divine authority. Thus, in the analysis of an act of faith the ultimate reason for adhering to the truths of faith is not the authority of the Church, but the authority of God. "When a person," says St. Thomas, "is led either by natural reason, or the testimony of the Law and the Prophets, or by the preaching of the Apostles or of others to believe, he can say that he believes, not on account of any of these—neither because of natural reason, nor the testimony of the Law, nor the preaching of others, but merely on account of Truth Itself." [1]

Some Catholic theologians thought that the authority of the Church enters as a partial motive in the assent to faith. This opinion is not, however, tenable; for, as faith is a Divine virtue its motive should be Divine and that not merely partially but fully, since the motive should be as comprehensive as the act which it influences. But the Church is not Divine,

[1] Ad verba ap. Joan. iv. 42.

unless in its origin. It is a human society instituted indeed by Christ, yet instituted for men and composed of men. Its authority, therefore, though infallible, is human, and consequently faith cannot find its ultimate motive in Church authority, but in Divine authority.

Again, the presentation by the Church of the truths of revelation has the same relation to faith as the presentation of God's goodness has to charity. But the presentation of God's goodness is not the motive of our love of God; neither is the presentation, therefore, by the Church of the truths of faith even a partial motive in influencing the believer to assent to the truths of revelation.[1]

Some difficulties were raised against this view by some who held that the authority of the Church is more than a mere condition requisite for Catholic faith. Thus it was argued: If the believer is asked why he believes in the Unity and Trinity of God, he replies that he does so because God has revealed those truths; but if asked why he believes that God has revealed them, his answer will be, "because the Church so teaches"; and thus it would seem that the ultimate reason for the assent to the truths of faith is the authority of the Church rather than the authority of God.

It may be said, in reply to this difficulty,

[1] Cf. Billuart, O.P., De obj. fid. dissert. 1 art. 2.

that the believer rightly assigns, as the motive of his faith, the authority of God; but when asked why he asserts that God has revealed a particular truth he appeals to the authority of the Church, not indeed because it supplies him with a motive for his faith, but because the Church has been commissioned by Christ to point out the truths of revelation in detail. She alone can make our faith which is Divine also Catholic and co-extensive with revelation; for it is only by her guidance that we can know all the truths of faith. The authority of the Church, then, although a necessary condition for Catholic faith, is not the motive or formal reason of the assent. The believer accepts the authority of the Church because she is the "pillar and the ground of truth." He must, in consequence, accept her teaching as a condition necessary for faith, Catholic and Divine. When, therefore, St. Augustine says that he would not believe the Gospel were it not that the Catholic Church moved him to it,[1] his words are not to be interpreted as if he attributed to the Church the motive of his belief. He rather thought that the Gospel could not be reasonably accepted as a depository of supernatural truth without the guidance of the Church to testify to its inspiration and to the truths which it contains. The faithful, therefore, are not like

[1] Contra Ep. Manichaei Fundam. c. 5. v. 6, Migne, *P.L.*, vol. xlii.

heretics who use their private judgment in determining what particular truths they are to accept, and what they are to reject. Catholics at the very outset accept the authority of the Church, and they do so on reasonable grounds. She has her credentials, and all the truths of revelation are reducible to her as to a universal rule, or as to a teacher, not indeed on whose authority they are believed, but by whose testimony they are known.

The teaching of the Church is the ordinary means of knowing revealed truth. It is said to be the ordinary means, for it is quite possible to elicit an act of faith without explicitly accepting the authority of the Church; thus a heretic in good faith may accept some of the truths of faith and believe in them on Divine authority, in so far as that authority can be reached through motives of credibility, and from the teaching of Sacred Scripture.

Such guidance, however, is not ordinary, nor is it universal or catholic. It can never, therefore, lead *per se* to the acceptance of all the truths of faith. The authority of the Church is, then, a necessary condition for Catholic faith, so that a person is said to be a Catholic, not merely because he belongs to a certain body of believers found at all times and practically in all places; but also on account of the rule of faith which he adopts. This rule is identical with that of all his co-religionists, and

is catholic inasmuch as it extends to all the truths of Divine revelation.

Since Christ and His Apostles made no exception when there was question of the acceptance of supernatural truth ; and since it is clear from Sacred Scripture that all the truths of faith are to be accepted, even under pain of eternal reprobation,[1] the necessity of a catholic or universal rule of faith becomes at once obvious. It is possible, however, for one who is ignorant of this matter to be saved, if his ignorance be not blameworthy. But even such a one depends on the Church for his faith, although he does not know it ; for not only has the Church, by her infallible authority, protected and safeguarded since Apostolic times the truths of faith, whether oral or written, but all persons who have Divine faith receive it, at least implicitly, on her authority. Cardinal Franzelin thus writes on this matter : " Articles of Faith can undoubtedly be proposed to persons who have never yet recognized the infallible authority of the Church, so that they may and ought to believe in them on Divine faith. Nor is there any reason why acts of faith are inadmissible in the case of those who, brought up in an heretical sect, are invincibly ignorant of the infallible authority of the Catholic Church. Other truths are sufficiently proposed to them in matters which unconsciously

[1] Matt. xxviii. 20 ; Mark xvi. 16.

come to them from that Church which otherwise they do not know. Such persons, so long as they do not grievously sin against faith, and are prompt to believe in and to follow Divine revelation, are in habit and disposition truly believers, even though they remain material heretics." [1]

The truths which are accepted by those who, from invincible ignorance, refuse to acknowledge the Church's authority are accepted on Divine, but not on Catholic faith. Cardinal Franzelin, therefore, adds : " Since a truth, even though it is revealed, cannot as a rule be presented in such a way that all are bound to believe in it —if it does not come either from a solemn judicial decision, or the public practice of the Catholic Church—it follows that the presentation of the truth on the part of the Church is required in order that the truth be received on Catholic faith." [2]

II.

But even Divine faith is impossible if a person wilfully refuse to accept the authority of the Catholic Church. That Christ left His Church behind Him to be an infallible guide to us in ascertaining the truths of faith is itself a revealed truth. It is therefore part of the material

[1] *De Divina Traditione et Scriptura*, Romae, 1882, p. 707.
[2] Ibid. p. 708.

object of faith. But a person who knowingly refuses to accept even one truth of faith rejects thereby all the truths of revelation, or rather, he accepts none of the truths of supernatural faith on Divine Authority. He may believe in them on human authority because from his earliest years he has heard them read from the Scriptures. He may accept them on the word of his father and mother who have told him of them since he was a child, but he does not accept them on the authority of Him Whose authority is alone the motive of supernatural faith. The person who unreasonably refuses to accept the testimony of another in one matter, does not really accept his testimony on other matters, though he may seem to do so. As he uses his reason in the rejection of one truth so does he use it in the acceptance of the others; or rather, he admits the truth of the facts which he accepts from motives other than the authority of the person who testifies to their accuracy. In regard to supernatural and Divine faith the Angelic Doctor makes this matter clear. He thus writes: "It must be said that in a heretic who denies [wilfully] one Article of Faith there is no habit of faith . . . and this is so because every habit is specified by its formal object, and if this is removed the essence of the habit disappears.

But the formal object of faith is the First Truth, inasmuch as it is manifest in Sacred Scripture

and in the doctrine of the Church which proceeds from the First Truth. Whoever therefore does not accept, as an infallible and Divine rule, the doctrine of the Church which proceeds from the First Truth, and as it is manifested in Sacred Scripture, such a person has not the habit of faith, and the things which are of faith he accepts from motives other than that of faith." [1]

The Angelic Doctor proceeds to show how the person who denies one Article of Faith and accepts the others is like one who assents to a conclusion without knowing or understanding the connexion between it and the premises from which it is deduced. The knowledge of a person who assents to a conclusion under such conditions is not scientific. It is merely an opinion. In like manner the formal heretic has not Divine faith even in reference to the Articles which he admits, but merely an opinion. He does not adhere to the First Truth in accepting them, but "holds those things which are of faith because he chooses (to do so), and from his own judgment."[2] St. Thomas, therefore, lays special emphasis on the close connexion which exists between the authority of the Church and the authority of God. He thus writes: "It is manifest that the heretic who wilfully discredits one Article of Faith is not prepared to follow in all things the doctrine of the Church." [3] The Saint supposes

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. V. art. 3. [2] Ibid. ad 1.
[3] Ibid. art. 3.

that such a heretic rejects the authority of God in revealing, because he rejects the authority of the Church in teaching.

Non-Catholics who grow up as material heretics, who begin to doubt, and who ultimately lapse into formal heresy and bad faith, often, if not always, do so by rejecting the authority of the Church. A non-Catholic who is in good faith and who has not sinned against faith may possibly do so by first doubting some truth, such as the doctrine of the Trinity, and then denying it. It seems difficult, however, to prove the sin of such a one—whom we are now supposing to be at first only a material heretic—if he does not wilfully reject the authority of the Church. In denying the doctrine of the Trinity he is merely applying the rule of faith which Protestantism gives him. No one can prove that he has misapplied that rule in interpreting a Mystery, or even in explaining it away. On the other hand, it is easy to see how a non-Catholic may cease to be in good faith, if, when he doubts the orthodoxy of his own position and recognizes that of the Catholic Church, he still refuses to submit to her teaching. In the latter case there is question, not of the application of a principle, true or false, but of the choice of a false principle in preference to one which is known to be true.

Since heresy was not, in St. Thomas' time, so general as it now is, the Angelic Doctor, in

the words quoted in the preceding paragraph, obviously refers to those who apostatize from Catholic faith, or who wilfully reject an Article of Faith. He attributes their loss of faith to the rejection of the doctrine of the Church as the rule of faith. But even those heretics who are brought up in a heretical sect, and who sin against faith, do so—if the matter be considered from the view-point of apologetics—because they reject the Church as the Proximate Rule of faith. If this be so it is difficult to see how the more conservative Protestants can blame their liberal brethren and accuse them of sin even when they deny the doctrine of the Fall, Eternal Punishment, and the Divinity of Christ. It may be said, perhaps, that by acting in this way they break with the tradition and authority of their Churches. But if authority is merely fallible it should yield to private judgment, since, in the interpretation of supernatural truth, such authority is possibly in error, and does not possess sufficient sanction to bind in conscience. The necessity, therefore, of an infallible rule of faith, which is also a living interpreter of revealed truth, becomes at once evident. On any other hypothesis private judgment must become the sole arbiter of revealed truth, and this is true even when the Bible is admitted to be infallible. Sacred Scripture cannot be a Proximate Rule of faith ; for the Bible, like other Books, contains words which are logical signs, and which are

meant to convey a certain definite meaning. The meaning must be given to those signs by the reader, so that the belief of the reader must rest on his individual judgment, or on the meaning which he attaches to the Sacred Writings.[1] The Scriptures are passive and lifeless, and hence Catholics assert that it is useless to accept the Sacred Scriptures as an infallible rule of faith unless the Proximate Rule is also infallible; for it may be said here as in logic that "the conclusion follows the weaker part," so that if the Proximate Rule of faith be fallible, even though the Remote Rule is infallible, the assent which follows is also fallible.

Although the Bible is the Word of God, and is, therefore, free from error, yet the meaning attached by an individual to the words or to the propositions which Sacred Scripture contains may be erroneous, since the human mind is, of itself, unable to interpret the supernatural. A person may therefore assent to what is erroneous, even though the truth is in the Sacred Books. Catholics insist, then, on the necessity of a Proximate Rule of faith which, like Sacred Scripture or the Remote Rule, is also infallible. In this way, and in this way alone, can the quicksands of heresy and infidelity be avoided; for private judgment—no matter what aids non-Catholics may be pleased to call in to assist them in the matter—is

[1] Cf. Murray, *De Ecclesia*, ed. compend. p. 323.

unable to interpret the supernatural, since on the Protestant hypothesis the Proximate Rule of faith is fallible, even though it is aided by the opinion or the judgment of the most learned, or by the guidance of a National Church, whether that Church's authority is obligatory or not.

Some non-Catholics assert that the Holy Ghost assists each individual in accepting what he is to believe and what he is to reject; but such an assertion possesses no value in apologetics, which deals with what is visible or evident from history and tradition. Moreover, it is easy to prove that no such assistance is given, for some non-Catholics accept truths of faith which others reject.

III.

The Proximate Rule of faith may be defined as *the universal, permanent, infallible, and extrinsic guide by which believers may know, without fear of error, the Word of God and the meaning of that Word.* This rule should be universal, and therefore should embrace all revealed truth, whether written or unwritten. It should also be a rule for all, rich and poor, learned and unlearned. It should be permanent, and should be in evidence from Apostolic times, and for all future time. The Proximate Rule of faith must therefore be indefectible, and should teach the Word of God, expound and define it

without fear of error, and without fear of contradiction. In a word, this rule of faith should be of such a kind that the mind must rest satisfied with its definitions and its adaptability and fitness to settle all difficult matters pertaining to revealed truth and the Divine Mysteries. It should be infallible in its decisions, otherwise it would not be permanent and unchangeable, nor could it claim our allegiance and obedience. Being infallible, it should carry its own sanction, and so bind the conscience to its decisions, under pain of loss of faith and reprobation. It must be a guide not merely for the Unwritten Word of God or Tradition, which Catholics admit, but also for the interpretation of the Written Word. It must be extrinsic to the believer; otherwise each man would become a rule of faith to himself.

This rule of faith is, in the words of St. Thomas, "the teaching of the Church, which proceeds from the First Truth"; [1] or it is the Church herself, either in the exercise of her ordinary and universal teaching authority, or in defining dogmatic truth, as in a General Council. What is true of the Church must also be true of the Roman Pontiff, since infallibility is not in the Church unless in so far as the Church is united to him.[2]

Some deny the need of any extrinsic, fixed, and Proximate Rule of faith; others limit the rule of faith to the Sacred Scriptures. "It is

[1] *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. V. art. 3. [2] Ibid. Q. I. art. 10.

often asked," says Whateley, " whether we are to set up each man's private interpretation of Scripture as his rule of faith, or to adopt and acquiesce in the Church's tradition. This alternative, again, has been objected to by some . . . who maintain that the rule of faith is to be neither the one nor the other of these, but the Scriptures themselves." [1]

In practice many non-Catholics appeal to a subjective criterion of interpretation, whether rational or theosophic, and this is done even by those who admit a certain amount of Church authority. But Protestantism cannot consistently push Church authority too far, since its own existence depends on a continued protestation against absolute authority as the final court of appeal; hence the fear of attributing anything like infallibility to the Church, and the consequent powerlessness of bishops and others in authority to check the doctrinal opinions of their subjects, whether those opinions tend towards the Church of Rome, or towards Agnosticism and Infidelity. Such difficulties must needs arise when authority is not recognized to be sufficiently strong to bind in conscience.

Other non-Catholics admit no fixed standard of belief, or, if they do, it falls below the supernatural, or it is even non-Christian; for " outside the pale of the Church from the

[1] *Dangers, etc.*, Essay 3, note c. pp. 175-6.

earliest Egyptian Gnostic," as Dr. Moehler tells us, "down to our own time . . . preconceived opinions derived from sources extraneous to Christianity have been made the standard for interpreting the authority of Scripture, the extent of that authority, and the mode of its use." [1]

Whatever may be the alleged criterion or rule advanced by non-Catholics for the interpretation of Sacred Scripture—whether it be the passing political view of a people, or the authority of a Church by law established, or the many influences or preconceived notions which are at work in the mind of the believer—we are justified in saying that the ultimate criterion and proximate rule of faith for all non-Catholic sects is individual and private judgment. This cannot be denied when the matter is reduced to its ultimate analysis.

Outside the Catholic Church authority in religion seems to be out of place, and indeed Protestantism is only consistent when it rejects all authority in matters of doctrine. In the words of Neander, a Protestant theologian and historian, "the Christian consciousness of the Reformers returned from its mediated position to the immediate relation to Christ, where it enjoyed independence of the authority of the Church." [2] Many, however, have seen the impossibility of

[1] Moehler's *Symbolism*, Robertson's translation, sect. 3, p. 251.
[2] *History of Christian Dogmas*, vol. ii. p. 621.

attempting to reach an external authority like Christ's by a way purely spiritual and subjective; for such an attempt would involve a contradiction which could only be disposed of in one of two ways, either by renouncing the idea that in Christ God manifested Himself in history to the end that the conduct of mankind might be permanently determined by Him, or the matter must be learned through a living, definite, and vouching fact; thus authority must have authority for its medium.[1] But the *reductio ad absurdum* is usually ignored by heretics, and hence they have approached the Scriptures prepared both to admit the historic Christ and to deny the infallible authority of His Church.

IV.

The Neo-Kantian and Modernist theologians have returned to the primitive Protestant idea of bringing the subjective consciousness to bear upon religion. But they have gone much further than the Reformers, and though less orthodox than most non-Catholics, they are more logical, since, with the rejection of all visible authority, they also reject the historic Christ, or at least subject both to the consciousness or the collective consciousness of believers. Their view represents

[1] Cf. Moehler, op. cit. p. 21.

a necessary issue on this matter suggested by Dr. Moehler, viz., that if Christians claim, as a right, to bring consciousness to bear upon Christ the God-Man, and at the same time reject authoritative and orthodox teaching, they open the way to the rejection of the historic Christ. The Modernists have cut off Christ as such from the domain of faith ; for the Christ of faith, they say, is not the Christ of history. They have not only excluded the Christ of faith from the domain of history, but they have also excluded the facts of history from the field of doctrine. They do not stop, therefore, at applying a subjective criterion to the interpretation of the facts of revelation ; they teach that objective revelation and faith itself depend for their existence on the subjective consciousness, so that the Inspired Books, as well as Tradition, have lost all value in the eyes of the New Theologians. The Inspired Books, they say, are the output of the subjective religious consciousness of a few choice souls who, having had extraordinary religious experiences, deemed it well to commit them to writing for the sake of the many who have never been blessed with such experiences. The Koran, Zendavesta, or the Brahminic Vedas, record experiences somewhat similar to those of the authors of Sacred Scripture. The interpretation given by the Church to these experiences is not to be ignored, the Modernists say, yet it must be subservient to the more accurate judg-

ment and correction of the exegete.[1] Religious formulas, according to them, must be accepted by the heart and sanctioned by it, and in order that these formulas continue to live they should be adapted to the faith of the believer, and should remain subservient to it; hence, if for any cause this adaptation ceases to exist, the formulas forthwith lose their primitive significance, and must of necessity be altered.[2] The Church must follow then rather than lead, as one can see from the following proposition condemned in the decree *Lamentabili*: "In defining truths the Church learning and the Church teaching so work together that nothing remains for the Church teaching but to sanction the common opinions of the Church learning." [3]

On the Modernist view of the Church's teaching authority as the rule of faith, we may quote the following words of Pius X: "And so they, the Modernists, audaciously take the Church to task for wandering, forsooth, from the right path, because she does not distinguish the religious and moral force of her dogmas from their external meaning; and because by her vain and obstinate adherence to formulas that have lost their meaning she permits religion itself to go to ruin. Blind, in truth, are they, and leaders of the blind! Puffed up with the proud name of science,

[1] Decree *Lamentabili*, prop. 2.
[2] Encycl. *Pascendi*.
[3] Prop. 6.

to such a height of folly have they come that they pervert the eternal idea of truth, and the true meaning of religion." [1]

V.

The attempt made by some non-Catholics to find a rule of faith by an appeal to Primitive Christianity does not offer a solution of the problem. On the contrary the appeal serves to bring out more prominently the need of a living, infallible authority in matters of faith. Primitive Christianity, we are told, does not survive, in its original purity, in any Christian society; and, since differences in religious beliefs cannot be settled by ecclesiastical authority, Christ's teaching should be accepted by us in its purity and as it came from His immediate successors; and since that alone is pure in the department of religion which came from Christ and those who were the orthodox interpreters of His teaching, the Sacred Books must be interpreted by us in the light of the historic beliefs of the Primitive Christians.

It is not difficult to see the practical inutility of such a rule of faith, if ecclesiastical, living, and infallible authority be ignored. In the first place there is, perhaps, as much difficulty in interpreting the teaching of Primitive Christianity

[1] Encycl. *Pascendi.*

without the help of an infallible teaching authority as there is in interpreting Sacred Scripture itself; and even if the same difficulties do not arise, we are still forced to accept private judgment as the Proximate Rule of faith. Without a guide men will differ on even the essentials of Primitive Christianity, and as a matter of fact they do differ on fundamental matters. Some think, for instance, that an infallible teaching authority and centralization of power was recognized in the beginning; others that the Churches were independent. Some hold that Christ did not even found a Church, and that the Church or Churches are of human origin; others admit that Christ not only founded a Church, but that He even bestowed on it an infallibility which lasted till the end of the Apostolic age, so that when infallibility was withdrawn the Church became corrupt. As regards supreme authority in the Church, some claim that it is Divine, while others assert that it is ecclesiastical, in its origin; others that it is merely civil. How are the differences to be reconciled? An appeal must be made to some tribunal. When opinions are so varied on this matter it is evident that Primitive Christianity and private judgment, whatever they may do to divide, can never unite, Christians in unity of belief. Besides, Christianity is not a living thing unless in so far as it survives in a living, organic, system or in a religious society. The only religious society that has survived from

primitive times is the Catholic Church. Primitive Christianity, then, is dead, and so is incapable of living again, or else it has continued to live, and must therefore have a form, centralization, directive power, unity, all of which must be visible, since it is useless to speak of an invisible thing living for centuries among men who are essentially corporeal beings. Besides, if Christian apologetics are to take scientific shape, the visible element in Christianity must serve as a basis for that science. We cannot be scientific otherwise, and to be non-scientific is to be unintelligible, or at least unconvincing. If Primitive Christianity has lived, it must have lived in the Catholic Church. She alone is the witness of Primitive Christianity, just as she is the witness of the teaching of Christ and of His Apostles, or as she is the witness of the Christianity of the Middle Ages. But if Christianity has lived in the Catholic Church the Church has not corrupted Christian doctrine. Corruption is the beginning of decay and death. Neither vigour, nor health, nor life can abide with corruption; whereas continued life is a sign of incorruption. If the Church, then, has continued to live she must have preserved identity of type, and therefore must now be what she always was: she has indeed grown; doctrine has developed; but growth and development are signs of life and vigour, not of decay and death.

Some Anglicans attempted another solution

of the difficulty.[1] It seemed to them possible to steer a middle course between the teaching of the Catholic and that of the Anglican Church. Newman himself, for some time before his conversion, could not see how the Roman Church represented the teaching of the Apostles. Her later teaching, especially as it was formulated in the decrees of the Council of Trent, seemed to him irreconcilable with her earlier doctrines. The new forms were to his mind corruptions. Of the Roman Church he thus wrote: "True, Rome is heretical now—nay, grant, she has already forfeited her orders;—yet at least she was not heretical in the primitive ages. If she has apostatized it was at the time of the Council of Trent."[2] On the other hand, he did not believe in the work of the pseudo-Reformers; and the Anglican Church, of which he was then a member, fell far below his religious ideals. "The Anglican Church has," he wrote, "committed mistakes in the practical working of its system, nay, is incomplete even in its formal doctrine and discipline."[3] He thought it possible, then, since the Church of Rome was once pure, to learn something from that Church; although he still accepted, as his standard or rule in selecting doctrinal truth, the Sacred Scriptures. The Bible should be interpreted, he thought, in the

[1] Cf. Newman, *Via Media*, vol. i. lect. v. p. 128.
[2] *Tracts for the Times*, No. 15.
[3] *Via Media*, vol. ii. p. 123.

light of Traditional Christianity, with the Church as a witness in important truths, while in unimportant matters antiquity itself should serve as a guide.[1]

The system does not escape from the difficulties attendant on every attempt to find a Protestant Rule of faith. The *Via Media* itself had no precedent in Traditional Christianity. In the circumstances it was difficult to know what truths represented Traditional Christianity; and if the Traditional Church herself was corrupt she could not be a safe witness. The Anglican Church could not represent Tradition. Christianity came from Palestine, and had been diffused throughout the world by a small band of men, under the leadership of St. Peter. The Anglican Church was confined to a small corner of the earth. She was only national, made by an Act of Parliament, and depending on the Crown for her very existence. Nothing could be more unlike the Primitive Church; while at best her testimony was only fallible. The theory of the *Via Media*, therefore, resolved itself into a system in which individual and private opinion became the ultimate arbiter of religion. Its advocates saw, too, that the system was without historical antecedents. With the Donatists and Arians such a method was not thought of, and, if it was, the compromise could not have

[1] Ibid. vol. i. p. 135.

borne fruit. Difficulties and differences were always settled by obeying the Church whose supreme authority was vested in St. Peter. Her decision was always final, and obedience to her teaching practically amounted to an acknowledgment of her infallibility. The penalty of persistent disobedience was excommunication and separation from her fold. Once an authority with such powers is admitted the principles of the *Via Media* fall to the ground. Newman himself was among the first to admit this fact.[1] He was, besides, impressed by the words of St. Augustine: "Securis judicat orbis terrarum; bonos non esse qui se dividant ab orbe terrarum."[2] By these words Newman realized that "the deliberate judgment, in which the whole Church at length rests and acquiesces, is an infallible prescription and a final sentence against such portions of it as protest and secede"; [3] and that by no less an authority than that of St. Augustine, "the theory of the *Via Media* was absolutely pulverized."

Of his feelings on this matter in 1839, Newman thus wrote in 1850: "It was difficult to make out how the Eutychians or Monophosites were heretics unless Protestants and Anglicans were heretics also. The dream of religion, and the combat of truth and error were ever one and

[1] *Apologia*, p. 117.
[2] *Cont. Ep. Parmen.* lib. iii. c. iv. n. 24, ap. Migne, *P.L.*, tom. xliii.
[3] *Apologia*, p. 117.

the same. The principles and proceedings of the Church now were those of the Church then; the principles and proceedings of heretics then were those of Protestants now. I found it so—almost fearfully; there was an awful similtude, more awful because so silent and unimpassioned, between the dead records of the past and the feverish chronicle of the present. The shadow of the Fifth Century was on the Sixteenth. It was like a spirit rising from the troubled waters of the old world with the shape and lineaments of the new." [1] Thus Newman saw that there is no place in the Divine Plan for division in the Church dispersed throughout the world, and that a National Church cannot in any way represent the Church of Christ.

The "Branch Theory" represents a subterfuge which is equally indefensible. Sacred Scripture is in entire opposition to the idea of such a scheme. Christ Himself founded a Church which should be as one sheepfold.[2] He intended it to be one Kingdom; and there is nothing between the Anglican, Greek, and Roman Churches which represents the unity of a kingdom. They represent the independence of separate societies in so far at least as independence of one another is concerned. But if the question is examined in detail it will be found that it is only the Roman or Catholic Church

[1] *Apologia*, p. 115. [2] John x. 1.

which deserves the name of a kingdom. She is often severely criticised by her adversaries for her independent attitude at times towards civil governments. But in the nature of things it must be so. The Church's independence furnishes us with one of the best proofs that she is the Kingdom so often referred to by Christ Himself. She has rights over which no earthly kingdom can have control; and she is the only power on earth that claims this independence of state authority. She has her credentials, and has never wavered in advocating her rights. The Anglican and Greek Churches have no such rights. The best proof of this is that they do not claim them; and even if they should attempt to set up such a claim, no one can doubt who should be the acknowledged masters. But there is no visible unity between the so-called Branch Churches; and an invisible unity is meaningless. Though nations may have many doctrines in common—scientific, political, social and economic—still they are not one. But the Roman Catholic, Anglican, and Greek Churches are not united even in doctrine. Moreover it is a fundamental doctrine in the teaching of Christ that there should be visible unity in His Church; unity, not only in doctrine and rite, but also in government; and if the three Churches are three branches of the true Church the least we might expect is that they should agree that they are such. Nothing repudiates that which

belongs to itself, and which contributes to its health and very existence. But the Greek Church repudiates the Anglican; the Roman Church repudiates both the Anglican and the Greek.

VI.

Some think that Christ's Church is ideal rather than real, and that to this ideal the real Church should ever tend. This ideal Church is for them the standard for both doctrine and morality. The view advanced by Professor Rashdall,[1] Hort,[2] Stanton,[3] and others, is thus explained by Professor Rashdall: "The Church," he writes, "must be visible or it is no Church. And yet, if it is visible, we cannot find in actual history or actual life the Church which corresponds to Christ's promises. Is it not clear that in all the New Testament teaching about the Church of Christ we are presented with an ideal; an ideal of what Christ's Society was meant to be; an ideal which she is meant to realize, which to some extent every Community of Christians has realized, but which no Church of any one time or place, no, nor the whole Church of all times and places, has ever actually

[1] *Doctrine and Development—The Idea of the Church*, p. 251, seqq.

[2] *The Christian Ecclesia*, 1897, pp. 290, 291.

[3] *The Place of Authority in Religious Belief*, c. iv. sect. iii. p. 195.

attained. Just in so far as the Church has answered to her ideal, so far can she claim that the tremendous things that are spoken of the ideal Church are true of her. Just in so far as she has fallen from her ideal, these things cease to be true of her; just so far the Church ceases to be the Church at all." [1]

The visible Church, is then, to the mind of this writer, the Church of Christ according as it approaches an ideal, while it ceases to be the Church of Christ in proportion as it recedes from it. But if the Church is visible, one may be anxious to know whether it is the Catholic, or Anglican, or Greek Church, or all together, or whether made up of all Christians, however divergent their views may be on religion. The advocates of an ideal Church seem, however, to prefer a Church which approaches the ideal in morality rather than in doctrine. But we submit that it is impossible to set up a standard of Christian morality, if we ignore matters of doctrine, and especially practical doctrine, such as the Sacraments, which are so closely associated with morality. Besides, a Roman Catholic thinks it a mortal sin to omit hearing Mass on a Sunday, if he do so without a reasonable cause. A Low Church Protestant might consider it a mortal sin even to attempt hearing Mass in a Catholic Church on a Sunday. Both cannot be within the

[1] *Doctrine and Development—Idea of the Church*, pp. 251-252.

same Church of Christ, if the question be decided merely from the view-point of law and morality. Moreover, moral truth belongs to the domain of doctrine. The Ten Commandments are revealed truths, and we are not free to accept or reject the truths connected with Christian Ethics, just as we are not free to accept or reject at will those truths which are generally labelled dogmatic truths.

Needless to say, that in regard to both dogmatic and moral truth the advocates of an ideal Church drag in private judgment as the ultimate court of appeal. The writer already mentioned thus proceeds: "Are we then to say that the historic Church has not erred? Surely such an assertion could only be made out by reducing the idea of a Church to a mere tautology. If we say that the Church is the body which teaches the truth, no doubt we may hold that the Church has not erred. But then that implies that we know from some other source what is the truth, and renders nugatory the attempt to make the judgment of the Church the criterion of truth or error."[1] Certainly, if Christ founded a Church to teach men supernatural truth, and men can all the time question the orthodoxy of her teaching, the Church even as it came from the Divine Founder was imperfect; and her imperfections are of such

[1] Ibid. pp. 249-250.

a kind that the Divine Artist is made responsible for them. His own promises to send the Holy Ghost to teach all truth, [1] His building the Church upon St. Peter, [2] the confirmation of St. Peter in Faith, and the commission entrusted to him to feed the flock, [3] Christ's condemnation of those who do not hear the teachers whom He commissioned to teach,[4] with His promise to be with them for all time, together with the promise of the power of binding and loosing in matters of conscience,[5] are all without meaning.

In referring to an authoritative guide for Christian conduct the author last quoted thus writes: "We may choose our authority as the painter chooses the School in which he studies art." This implies that the Church of Christ has not the power of making laws binding in conscience. It is difficult to see how we are to define the Church, if we are not bound to obey her either in faith or in morals. Yet another writer suggests a shadowy outline of the Church for us when he says "there may be, and I believe are, broad distinctions in the extent to which different communities of Christians depart from it (the ideal), such as will justify the view that some are members of the Church and others are not." [6]

[1] John xiv. 17; xv. 26; xvi. 13. [2] Matt. xvi. 18.
[3] Luke xxii. 31-32; John xxi. 15-17.
[4] Mark xvi. 16; Matt. xxviii. 20.
[5] Matt. xvi. 19; xviii. 18.
[6] Stanton, *The Place of Authority in Religious Belief*, p. 195.

It may be noticed that this writer claims nothing more than probability for the existence of the distinctions by which we may know what sect belongs to the Church of Christ and what one does not. But, even if distinctions are admitted, how are we to know them? The members of a sect who are excluded from the Church of Christ will certainly expect authority for the application of such distinctions, and an authority which is not merely arbitrary. Moral intuitions and perceptions are of no value in deciding this matter, since the members of any sect may appeal to such intuitions and perceptions to justify their attitude towards religion, and even towards morality. Besides, the advocates of an ideal Church clearly presented to us in the Gospels yet never realized in actual life, cannot condemn certain sects on the ground that they fall below their standard, since they themselves admit that no form of Christianity rises to it. The Church, then, according to this theory must be indefinable, and if visible, no person knows where to find it. An ideal Church cannot, therefore, be taken as a guide to either faith or morals.

VII.

Other non-Catholics try to find in the Creed alone a standard of belief. But the Creed must be so interpreted as to harmonize with Sacred Scripture; and whatever difficulties may arise

in the application of individual reason to the interpretation of the texts of Sacred Scripture must also arise in the interpretation of the Creed. As a matter of fact men have divergent views even on the fundamental Articles of the Creed. St. Paul was one of the Apostles, yet even the fundamental doctrines preached by St. Paul and contained in the Creed are differently explained by those who accept the Creed. "The Reformation theologians," writes J. S. Banks, "treated St. Paul as if he were one of themselves. More recent writers do the same. In Neander and Godet, Paul is a pectoral theologian; in Ruckert, a pious supernaturalist; in Baur, a Hegelian; in Luthardt, orthodox; in Ritschl, a genuine Ritschlian."[1] Thus it happens that where there is no genuine Rule of faith, interpreters of revealed truth, instead of conforming their views to Scripture, or to the Creed, contrive to make both suit their own views. Thus the way is opened to Naturalism and Rationalism.

By the application of private judgment in interpreting Sacred Scripture and the Creed, Protestantism became Rationalism in the seventeenth century, Deism in the eighteenth, while in the nineteenth Schleiermacher said to the dry bones in the camp of Protestantism: "I will introduce into you a spirit and you shall live."[2] But his hopes were vain in the matter, as all hope must

[1] *Expository Times*, 1904, p. 304.
[2] Cf. De Groot, O.P., *Summa Apologet.* p. 359.

be which involves the rejection of the orthodox Rule of faith.

An attempt to establish unity among the different schools of Christian thought on a broader basis than that of the Creed was made by Jurieu. According to this author the fundamental truths of Christianity are alone sufficient for Christian faith. Christians should be free to admit or reject the other truths, or at least the denial of them should not exclude a person from visible unity with the Christian Church. No other Rule of faith is needed for Christians than this, and it is especially easy, since there is a consensus of belief among all Christians in regard to the fundamental truths. If one claims to be a Christian he must admit the existence of a God Who will reward the good and punish the wicked, the Incarnation, and the Redemption. Jurieu thus briefly enumerates these truths: "There is one God, the Remunerator of those who fear Him; there is one Redeemer Jesus, or the Messiah, through Whom we obtain remission of our sins, grace, and life eternal: these are the fundamental articles." [1]

It is worthy of note that of the advocates of this theory not a few exclude from the category of the *fundamentals* some of the truths just mentioned, while many of those who admit the theory include among the *fundamentals* truths

[1] *Le vrai systeme de l'Eglise*, p. 166; *Traite de l'Eglise*, p. 517, ed. 1688.

which Jurieu considered non-fundamental. It is evident, therefore, that there must be a Rule of faith even to decide what the fundamental truths are, which all Christians are bound to accept. Moreover, Sacred Scripture and Tradition make no difference between fundamental truths and other revealed truths when there is question of accepting them on faith. But we cannot be certain of many of the truths of faith, unless we are guided by the Church, for she alone can supply us with a Rule of faith for embracing with certainty all revealed truth.

Professor Harnack goes even further than Jurieu, and limits the teaching of Christ to two or three doctrines which are not even true in the sense in which that writer understands them. Christ, he says, preached the Fatherhood of God and the Brotherhood of Man. But Professor Harnack's conception of Christ is Arian. He supposes that He is not one in Substance with the Father, and where He differs from other men the difference is one of degree and not of kind.

Harnack's explanation of the growth and development of Catholicism serves as an illustration of the possibilities of Higher Criticism, when it is the product of a peculiarly speculative, and perhaps unconsciously prejudiced, mind. According to this critic the Christological setting of later Christian doctrine is foreign to the scope of Christ's teaching, while a departure from the

purity and simplicity of the Christian religion is noticeable even in the writings of St. Paul and St. John. During the period in which these two Apostles wrote, the Christian belief in the Redemption and Expiation, as well as in that of the Resurrection, was introduced. In the period which immediately succeeded the Apostolic, and which is styled by Harnack the pre-Catholic period, began the tendency towards Catholicism which became afterwards so marked in the later evolution of Christianity. The teaching of Christ was so coloured and transformed when it came in contact with the Hellenic mind, that the simple doctrine preached by Him would scarcely be recognized by the Galilean fishermen in its new form, or when, dressed in the philosophic setting of the schools of Greece and Alexandria, it emerged in the form of a religious philosophy. Harnack looks upon Catholicism as a post-Apostolic product, while Protestantism represents, in his eyes, a wholesome reaction against Catholicism, and is a fair attempt to return to the primitive and pure teaching of Christ.[1]

Respect for tradition or authority is not a strong characteristic with Biblical Rationalists, and Harnack's dislike of systematized religion in the Catholic sense permeates his writings, and distorts his conception of Christ and of the Kingdom which He came on earth to found.

[1] Cf. Bonaccorsi, *Harnack e Loisy*, Firenze, 1904.

While many find in Christ a faith which can only last as long as it is associated with a number of supernatural truths clearly and definitely revealed, the Rationalist rather sees in Christ the influence of a Personality in the world of religion. But how the higher precepts of morality are to influence men's lives in the newer and higher Kingdom without truths corresponding to them, it is difficult to understand. If Christ did not preach truths which men cannot know by the light of reason—such as His own Divinity, the Incarnation and Redemption, as well as the ecclesiastical, sacramental and human methods of men to God—His influence in the world for nearly two thousand years is unintelligible. Without an extensive doctrine of the supernatural; without the abiding Presence of Christ in the Church; without a Hierarchy, Sacraments, and the influence of grace in men's souls—Personality alone cannot explain the effects of Christianity on the world for such a period of time, and, above all, in its struggle against passion and sin. Yet the Rationalist attaches a mere ethical value to the influence of Christ, or as Mr. Campbell puts it: "Jesus was more than an example. He was a living force"—whatever that may mean, when understood in a non-Catholic sense. Needless to say, in the distorted view of Christianity presented by the Biblical Rationalist there is no room left for supernatural faith. Moreover,

the Rationalists' views are not merely historically unsound, they are also tinged with Pantheism and even with Atheism.

Many Biblical Rationalists still profess to be Christian Protestants; and Harnack—whom we speak of here because of his learning, and still more because he is recognized as a leading exponent of the religious views of an advanced section of German Protestants—claims to be an orthodox Protestant; yet he would establish a Rule of faith which lops off from Christianity practically all supernatural truth, and that, too, in such a way that even the truths which he leaves untouched cannot be known by faith. Faith, to be orthodox, implies the submission of reason to authority. But with Harnack reason and the historical sense are the criteria of religious truth, and faith, according to him, should immediately depend on the principles of criticism, and on what he calls the intuitive sense of truth; whereas orthodox faith should, of its very nature, rest on authority. But the Biblical Rationalist does not like authority in religion. "It is Catholicism," Harnack writes, "as a religion and an ecclesiastical spirit which threatens us; it is clericalism and ritualism, the alluring union of exalted piety and solemn secularity, and the substitution for religion of obedience." [1]

[1] *Thoughts on Protestantism*, English translation. Author's Preface, p. 8.

Rationalists say that additions were made to Primitive Christian teaching in the pre-Catholic and Catholic periods. But an unprejudiced study of Primitive Christianity shows that the growth of Christian doctrine in the past did not imply any objective increase in the truths of revelation. Doctrinal developments, indeed, there were; but the developments only served to prove the truth of the Catholic faith. They implied not only principles from which they grew, but were also in themselves proof of the vital character of those principles. Moreover, the authority of the Church has ever been a guiding principle in doctrinal development. And, just as a living organism, if it is strong, vigorously expels whatever is foreign to it, so the Catholic Church has ever purged out what is foreign to the Deposit of Faith. Christians, therefore, have at all times clung to the teaching of the Church as children cling to the mother in whom they trust.

It is impossible to read the Gospels without seeing there that authority and obedience are essential to Christianity. Our Lord Himself said that we are to become as little children.[1] His Apostles went forth with an authority akin to that which He received from His Father.[2] St. Paul was not the inventor of new methods when he practically cast the dust from his feet

[1] Matt. xviii. 3.

[2] Matt. xxviii. 18, 19.

on the Athenians' refusal to hear his doctrine of the Resurrection.[1] It was intellectual pride that cut off the Pharisees and Scribes from a share in the Kingdom. The Pharisees were the Rationalistic critics of their day. The Rationalists despise the teaching of those who bear the credentials of Christ's authority, just as the Pharisees despised Christ Himself, for He said: "He who despiseth you despiseth Me."[2] Besides, history testifies,[3] and even Christian archæology proves,[4] that the sacramental system and the Hierarchy are not even an after-growth, much less a perversion, of Christianity.

VIII.

An attempt to find a Rule of faith and establish a principle of Christian unity was made by some Protestants who hoped to find a solution of their difficulties in accepting those truths only which are admitted by the well-known sects, and chief Christian communities. But a difficulty arises when one attempts to find out what those Christian sects are. The Synod of Lausanne, in the year 1857, declared that those are to be reckoned as Christians who deny even the

[1] Acts, xvii. 32-33.
[2] Luke x. 16; cf. Matt. x. 40; John xiii. 20.
[3] Cf. Pourrat, *Theology of the Sacraments*; Tixeront, *History of Dogmas*, English Translation, Hierarchy, pp. 84, 109, 137, et seqq.
[4] Cf. Marucchi, *The Catacombs of Rome and Protestantism*.

Divinity of Christ, provided they admit that Christ was a perfect man.[1] According to this rule even Rationalists may be reckoned among the Christian communities, and certainly Liberal Protestants, Unitarians, and Socinians. But Unitarians and Socinians do not believe in the doctrine of the Blessed Trinity, although it is a fundamental truth of Christianity; and Rationalists refuse to admit even the possibility of the supernatural, such as miracles and prophecy. The hypothesis, then, represents an attempt to validate a principle which is subversive of all revelation, and therefore of Christianity. Indeed we find the Eternal Sonship of Christ denied by many Liberal Christians of the various sects, who expressly, or in covert terms, speak of Christ as a mere man.

When the authority of the Catholic Church is rejected the old errors ever return with tragic nemesis. Ebion and Cerinthus live again, and some who still profess Christianity follow easily in the footsteps of Voltaire, Renan and Strauss. And although many non-Catholics do not agree with all the findings of the ultra-Liberal School, yet it is sad to think that they admit the validity of a principle which logically leads to Liberalism in religion. Rationalists and Infidels do not abuse a principle; they apply it with terrible logic. To attempt, therefore, to establish a

[1] Cf. Tanquerey, *De Invent. Verae Ecclesiae*, p. 407.

principle of belief on the union of the sects, some of which are ultra-Liberal in faith and religion, and all of which reject truths which Catholics look upon as vital, is to attempt what is impossible.

There is only one means of securing unity in faith, and that was provided by Christ Himself, when He founded His Infallible Church to safeguard revelation and to guide men unerringly to faith. This solution of the difficulty even some non-Catholics admit, though in the concrete they are unable, or unwilling, to apply it. The Neo-Lutherans say, for instance, that there should be authoritative power to teach in matters of faith, though they fail to show where it exists. Some of the High Church Anglicans who are anxious for the reunion of Christendom are also interested in the search for a supreme authority which to them seems to have yet no real existence. It can only exist, they think, when reunion is effected. They hope for a supreme authority in the future; they hope for a compromise of some kind, though for the present they can only regret the disunion which exists among Christians. "We acquiesce, apparently with complete content," says Lord Halifax, "in a state of things in which participation together in the great act by which we have communion with Our Lord and with one another is impossible, and we do not even seem to realize that it is not perfectly natural, that Christians professing to love the

same Lord should be unable to communicate at the same altar." [1] But there is only one possible solution of the difficulty, and that is uncompromising submission to the Apostolic See. The supreme power is there and it is actual. It exists also with the fullness of infallible authority. In Christ's Church infallibility is not, as Pusey thought, something potential, and in abeyance until Christendom is re-united. Such a view is not only opposed to the teaching of Christ, but it implies that His work was imperfect. The advanced High Church Party, then, does not escape from the difficulties associated with every phase of Protestantism. "It must be said that Ritualism," wrote Cardinal Manning, "is private judgment in gorgeous raiment wrought about with divers colours."

IX.

The Catholic Church alone provides us with a Rule of faith possessing all the required conditions. She alone is a safe guide to her children when there is question, not merely of fundamental truth, but also of all supernatural truth and of every phase of it. Her teaching authority extends even to Theological Conclusions, and she exercises her power in condemning the

[1] Spencer Jones, *England and the Holy See*, Introduction, p. xiii.

teaching of pseudo-science when it endangers the truths of faith of which she is the accredited guardian. She teaches all men, learned and unlearned, rich and poor, prince and plebeian; and her teaching is universal, and binds all alike. Even great learning or established reputation have little weight with her, when the possessor of either forces opinions upon the world which she, under the infallible guidance of the Holy Spirit, knows to be opposed to revealed truth. As a kind mother she deals gently with her erring children, but strongly; and when they prove rebellious and obstinate she does not compromise, but in sorrow chooses to cut them off from her fold. Her action, even then, is not intolerant, unless one can say that it is intolerant to condemn error, or that it is cruel to save her children from the influence of nominal Catholicism, or that it is wrong to cut off an infected limb from the human body to save the life of the body.

Not only does the Church teach all truth, but her teaching is obvious to all, for she provides a Rule of faith for all; and in this she resembles a kind master who teaches the simple and unlettered child, as well as the more advanced and mature. Anyone understanding the Catholic position must see the contrast which exists between the Church and Sacred Scripture as immediate guides in matters of faith. Some people are illiterate and cannot read. Many who

are able to read and who are even anxious to find out what they are to believe, have little time to devote to the reading of Sacred Scripture.[1] Even those who have sufficient time at their disposal to devote to the study of Sacred Scripture cannot explain it correctly. The Eunuch could not understand the text from the Prophet Isaiah, when he said to Philip the deacon: "How can I understand unless some man show me?"[2] Sacred Scripture cannot be the immediate guide to faith. A guide must be sought in the teaching of those who are vested with authority from Christ. Our Lord gave that authority, when He said to the Apostles: "Going, therefore, teach ye all nations."[3] In imposing His command on the Apostles Christ imposed a corresponding obligation on the faithful to hear them and their successors in the sacred ministry; for "faith cometh by hearing," as St. Paul teaches.[4]

The strength, firmness and immutability of the doctrinal teaching of those who are the legitimate exponents of revealed truth are emphasized by St. Paul in his Epistle to the Ephesians.[5] He speaks of those who do not hear the ministers of Christ as "learning and never attaining to the knowledge of the truth."[6]

[1] Cf. *Sum. Theol.* IIa. IIae. Q. I. art. 9 ad 1.
[2] Acts viii. 31.
[3] Matt. xxviii. 19.
[4] Rom. x. 17.
[5] Eph. iv. 11-12.
[6] 2 Tim. iii. 7.

Such persons have been branded at all times as heretics, and by that title they were known to St. Jude the Apostle. He refers to them as men "who separate themselves." [1] By separating from the Church, and withdrawing from her authority, they at the same time cut themselves off from the influence of the Holy Ghost, Who is with the Church now as He was with her at the Council of Jerusalem when the decisions of that Council were given with the authority of the Holy Spirit. "It hath seemed good to the Holy Ghost and to us," St. James said, in his address to the Council.[2] The Spirit of Truth cannot be with those who refuse to obey that authority with which alone He associates Himself as Teacher.[3]

The Catholic Church, and she alone, continues the work of the Apostles. She has the notes of the Apostolic Church, and she claims exclusively what it claimed. She has taught from Apostolic times; and the first Christians depended on her for knowledge of revealed truth when it was impossible to find it in Sacred Scripture. The Scripture of the New Testament was not written for some years after Our Lord's Ascension, and even when written it was not accessible to all. The art of printing was not discovered for fourteen centuries after the time in which the

[1] Jude i. 19.
[2] Acts xv. 28.
[3] De Groot, O.P., *Summa Apologet.* pp. 356, 357.

Gospels were written, and manuscripts of the Bible were during all that time rare and also extremely dear. To speak of Sacred Scripture, then, as the Rule of faith, for all time, and for all persons, is evidently absurd. St. Augustine, therefore, truly said that men cannot embrace the true religion, if they ignore the solemn guidance of living authority.[1]

Divine and Apostolic Tradition, as well as the authority of the Fathers and Doctors of the Church, testify that the Church, and the Church alone, can provide us with a safe Rule of faith. St. Ignatius Martyr,[2] St. Irenæus,[3] St. Ambrose[4] and St. Augustine,[5] condemn those who obstinately cling to their own opinions in matters of faith, or who are unwilling to accept the teaching of the Church. Even Tertullian tells us that we are not to accept supernatural truth unless from the Church which the Apostles founded.[6]

The difficulties which are usually brought forward against Catholic teaching on this matter can be easily explained. Some say, for instance, that when St. Paul teaches that faith cometh by hearing he is merely referring to the interior voice of the Holy Spirit and not to the word of the preacher. But from the context in St. Paul's

[1] *De utilitate credendi*, c. ix.
[2] Ad Trall. vi. 2.
[3] *Adv. Haer.* lib. iii. 3.
[4] *Ep. lxxii. ad Vercell. Eccl. n.* 41.
[5] *C. Ep. Fundam*, cap. v.
[6] *De praescr.* c. xxi.

Epistle to the Romans it is evident that he is referring to the hearing the Word of God from those who preach it. This is the ordinary way of receiving God's Word. If it were to be received otherwise the authoritative character of the Apostles' mission to preach to the world would be without meaning, as would also the condemnations and penalties threatened against those who should refuse to hear them.[1] In extraordinary circumstances, it is true, as in the case of the Apostles and Prophets, God did reveal some of His truths by internal revelation, but the Prophets and Apostles were the pioneers deputed to carry those truths to others. Such is not God's ordinary way of manifesting Divine Truth, even though in ordinary circumstances the interior voice of the Holy Spirit is also heard. "There is," says the Angelic Doctor, "a twofold voice: one exterior, by which God speaks to us through preachers; another interior, by which He speaks to us by Divine inspiration." [2]

Again, it is objected against Catholics that the Church cannot be the Rule of faith for all revealed truth, for this very truth itself, viz., that the Church is the Proximate Rule of faith, is also accepted on faith. This truth, it is said. cannot be a Rule for the acceptance of itself. But Catholics say, in reply, that the Catholic polemic claims the Church to be the Rule of faith

[1] Matt. xxviii. 20; Mark xvi. 16.
[2] Quaest. disp. *de Veritate* Q. XVIII. art. 3.

for all revealed truth since there is no other reasonable way to the acceptance of revealed truth in its fullness. The Catholic apologist does not say that he accepts the Church as the Rule of faith, because he believes in it as a revealed truth, although it is such. He accepts it because it is forced on him by the evidence of the Divine Commission given to the Church by Christ. It is evident to him, as it should be to all reasonable men, that the Roman Church is One, Holy, Catholic, and Apostolic; that she is in truth the Church of Christ. When the Catholic apologist, therefore, applies the authority of the Church as a Rule of faith to the Proximate Rule of faith itself, he applies that authority as it is accepted on evidence and by arguments from reason. But even if applied as it is accepted on faith—as it is by many of the faithful—it is a sufficient Rule even for itself, "just as light may be seen without the aid of other light." [1]

A similar reply may be made to those who accuse Catholics of involving themselves in a *vicious circle* when they accept the Church on the authority of an Inspired Book, and afterwards prove the inspiration of that Book on the authority of the Church. Here also we are dealing with Fundamental Theology which puts before men the reasonableness of the Catholic position. If the Catholic polemic were based on faith, or

[1] De Groot, O.P., *Sum. Apologet.* Q. X. art. 11 ad 2.

on the Inspired Word of God as such, it could not convince the unbeliever who asks for reasons before he is willing to accept revealed truth. But all historical facts appeal to reasonable men. We accept the Bible as a historical work and not necessarily as inspired, when we prove from it that the Church is the Rule of faith. The question of accepting the Church, as the Rule of faith, on faith, does not arise when we are dealing with apologetics, although as Catholics we claim it to be such, and as such it is treated of in a special department of theology. But beliefs are useless for argument, and men with divergent beliefs who do nothing but pit their beliefs against each other will always remain in opposition. If, indeed, it is further urged that many refuse to accept the historical value of the Sacred Books, the simple reply is that they can only do so by discounting the use of right reason and the canons that govern the acceptance of all historical truth. By taking up such an attitude they put themselves outside the pale of all reasonable discussion.

On the lines suggested in the preceding arguments many of the difficulties advanced by non-Catholics can be explained. Thus, a difficulty is found in the words of Our Lord to the Jews, when He said: "Search the Scriptures for you think in them to have life everlasting." [1] Accord-

[1] John v. 39.

ing to some non-Catholics, Our Lord in these words established the Sacred Scriptures as the Proximate Rule of faith. But a person who accepts the Proximate Rule of faith should accept the truths of faith of which it is the standard. The Jews accepted the Scriptures, and according to the testimony of Our Lord they believed to have in them Life Eternal. The same Scriptures gave testimony of Christ. Why, then, did they not accept Christ, if the Sacred Scripture is the Proximate Rule of faith, and is alone the guide to Him? They rejected Him and His teaching, and that on the Protestant Rule of faith which is the private interpretation of Sacred Scripture. They erred, then, not by rejecting the Scriptures, but because they rejected the Proximate Rule of faith, which to them was the teaching of Christ Himself. The Bible, therefore, as interpreted by each individual, cannot be the Proximate Rule of faith, and Our Lord did not intend that it should be regarded as such when He asked the Jews to search the Scriptures.

We have already said that the Church grounds her apologetic on Sacred Scripture, and, like her Divine Founder, asks all who wish to be saved to "Search the Scriptures," for they give testimony of her; yet the Church is herself a great fact linked even historically with Christ, and therefore bringing with her her own motives of credibility. Yet she appeals to the Sacred

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Books in proof of her claims, and especially as they are admitted to be true by all who deserve the name of Christian. The motives of credibility are in the Bible, and just as the Jews could not believe until they accepted the word of Christ, so people, as a rule, cannot believe with supernatural faith until they accept the authority of the Church, whose word is alone a sufficient Rule of faith. She is the vicegerent of Christ on earth. Like the noble Bereans, of whom St. Luke speaks, all who wish to believe should search the Scripture with eagerness, examine and question, and thus arrive at a living Rule of faith. Once such a Rule is admitted, there is no longer room for hesitation or doubt with regard to the acceptance of any truth proposed by the Church. Reason must then bow to infallible authority, and such an attitude of mind is alone reasonable.

THE END.

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